THE
ŚAKTI CULT AND TĀRĀ

Edited by

D. C. SIRCAR

Tantra

UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA

HE SAKTI CULT AND TĀRĀ

2006

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UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA

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No. II-B (SEMINARS)

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THE
ŚAKTI CULT AND TĀRĀ

Edited by
D. C. SIRCAR
Carmichael Professor and Head of the Department of Ancient Indian History and Culture, Calcutta University

[redacted]

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PREFACE

For the second series of Lectures and Seminars organised by the U.G.C. Centre of Advanced Study in the Department of Ancient Indian History and Culture, University of Calcutta, the late Dr. J. N. Banerjea, formerly Carmichael Professor of the University, was invited to deliver a course of six lectures and to preside over the deliberations of two days' Seminars. The title of Dr. Banerjea's Lectures was *Pauranic and Tantric Religion : Early Phase*, while the subjects selected for the Seminars were (1) Origin and Evolution of the Cult of Śakti and (2) Iconography of Tārā.

Altogether eleven Indian Universities were invited to send their representatives for participating in the Seminars, and the delegates of eight of them actually attended. Many of these scholars contributed papers while a number of articles were also received from others attending the Seminars. The Centre is thankful for the co-operation it received from the various Universities and their representatives as well as from the other scholars who contributed for making the Seminars a success.

The Seminars had been held on the 9th and 10th of April 1965, while Prof. N. R. Ray, former Director of the Centre, left the University by the close of the following month. Therefore my first task, on being appointed Director of the Centre, was to make this volume ready for the press and to arrange for its publication.

The Proceedings of the Seminars have been prepared from the notes submitted by the Reporters, to whom my thanks are due. The articles have been included in the volume without substantial change.

The index is the work of Dr. Sm. K. Saha and others to whom I offer my sincere thanks.

Centre of Advanced Study,
Dept. of Ancient Indian History and Culture,
University of Calcutta,
10th May, 1967.

D. C. Sircar
Director

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PART I

ŚAKTI CULT

Proceedings of the Seminar

First Day

Date : 9th April, 1965.

Time : 10-30 A.M. to 1 P.M. and
3 P.M. to 5 P.M.

Subject : Origin and Evolution of the Cult of Śakti.

Place : Teachers' Common Room, Asutosh Building, Calcutta University.

President : DR. J. N. BANERJEA, retired Carmichael Professor of Ancient Indian History and Culture, Calcutta University.

Principal Speaker : DR. GAURINATH SASTRI, Principal, Sanskrit College, Calcutta.

Participants besides the President and the Principal Speaker :—

1.	PROF. T. V. MAHALINGAM	Madras University
2.	PROF. B. P. SINHA	Patna University
3.	DR. R. N. MEHTA	M. S. University (Baroda)
4.	DR. R. S. GUPTE	Marathwada University
5.	DR. SM. B. LAHIRI	Jadavpur University
6.	SRI K. S. BEHERA	Utkal University
7.	SRI B. D. CHATTERJEE	Burdwan University
8.	SRI P. K. MAJUMDAR	Rajasthan University
9.	DR. K. K. GANGULY	Calcutta University
10.	SRI D. MUKHERJEE	Calcutta University
11.	PROF. D. C. SIRCAR	Calcutta University
12.	DR. A. N. LAHIRI	Calcutta University
13.	SRI K. G. GOSWAMI	Calcutta University
14.	SRI R. K. BHATTACHARYA	Centre of Advanced Study in Ancient Indian History and Culture, Calcutta University
15.	DR. H. N. CHATTERJEE	Sanskrit College, Calcutta, and Calcutta University
16.	DR. B. N. BANERJEE	Sanskrit College, Calcutta
17.	DR. M. HARA	Tokyo University, Japan
18.	SRI A. K. BHATTACHARYA	Sanskrit College, Calcutta
19.	SRI N. N. BHATTACHARYA	Chinsurah, Hooghly Dist., West Bengal

and others.

Reporters : SRI R. K. BHATTACHARYYA and
DR. SM. B. BHATTACHARYYA

Morning Session

The seminar started at 10-30 A.M. Prof. D. C. Sircar welcomed the assembly of scholars and explained the purpose of the University Grants Commission in opening the Centre of Advanced Study in Ancient Indian History and Culture at the University of Calcutta. He also explained the aim of the authorities of the Centre in arranging for the second series of Lectures and Seminars. Prof. Sircar then invited Dr. J. N. Banerjea to preside over the Seminar, and Dr. Gaurinath Sastri to initiate the discussion on the Cult of Śakti. Accordingly, Dr. Banerjea took the chair and Dr. Sastri read his paper on the subject.

Dr. Sastri gave an account of the conception of Śakti especially in Vedic, Epic and Puranic literature. After Dr. Sastri's paper had been read, the delegates from the different Universities and other scholars present in the hall were invited to ask questions on the subject.

With reference to Dr. Sastri's paper, Sri P. K. Majumdar raised the question of the comparative value of the literary and archaeological evidence in regard to Śakti worship in ancient India. He emphasised the prevalence of the Mother-goddess cult in the protohistoric civilization of the Indus valley. Prof. Sircar and Dr. Banerjea pointed out that Dr. Sastri had confined himself to literary evidence.

Sri R. K. Bhattacharya wanted to know the significance of the name Kātyāyanī applied to the Mother-goddess in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. Dr. Banerjea referred him to the well-known work of R. G. Bhandarkar and said that the goddess was called Kātyāyanī probably because she was worshipped by the members of the Kātya clan.

Sri P. K. Majumdar wanted to know what the relation between Śakti and the Mother-goddess was and whether Śakti worship existed in the 2nd century B.C.

Dr. Banerjea replied that Śakti and the Mother-goddess are basically the same and that, as regards the second part of the question, we have to be guided by the evidence at our disposal.

Prof. B. P. Sinha referred to the seals from the proto-historic sites, which emphasise the productive power of the goddess, while Prof. Sircar pointed to the worship of the female organ, indicating the prevalence of the Mother cult, in the later ages. A stone image of the private parts of a female, Prof. Sircar said, is known to have been installed for worship at Nagarjunikonda by a queen of the Ikṣvāku king Ehuvala Śāntamūla (fourth century A.D.). Prof. Sinha referred to three different aspects of Śakti in the Indus valley civilization. He thought that her conception originated in the pre-Vedic age.

Dr. R. N. Mehta wanted some details about the passages referred to by Dr. Sastri in his paper without quoting the texts. He further referred to a few images which, according to him, might be *grāma-devatā*, *kula-devatā* or the like and not toys as in usually supposed. He wanted to know whether such images were found in any foreign land. The origin of the Mother-goddess, according to him, should be traced in the stone age.

Prof. Mahalingam supported the views of Prof. Sinha. Further he referred to the anthropological and philosophical aspects of Śakti worship.

Dr. M. Hara of the University of Tokyo desired to know whether Śakti had any relation with the earth. Reply to his question was given in the affirmative by Dr. Sastri, Prof. Sircar and Dr. Banerjea. Prof. Sircar said that a Mohenjodaro seal depicts the goddess with a shoot issuing from her womb.

Dr. Gupte asked whether the Vedic Mother-goddess had any relation with the Śakti of the Purāṇas, and

Sri B. D. Chatterjee wanted to know whether the modern goddesses are new creations, exhibiting no influence of the Vedic goddesses upon them. While dealing with these problems, Dr. Sastri said that Śakti has nothing to do with the Śakti cult. Prof. Sircar pointed out that Dr. Sastri was apparently referring to the Śakti aspect of the female deities and not to the Mother-goddess, the existence of whose cult can be traced from archaeological evidence.

Sri K. S. Behera asked whether the Vedic or the non-Vedic element is predominant in the present day worship of Śakti. The reply was in favour of the non-Vedic elements.

Sri K. G. Goswami asked whether there had been any relation between the different names of Durgā and from which date these different names of the goddess originated. In reply, Dr. Banerjea said that some relations between the different names exist in his opinion, but that, as regards the date of origination of her different names, nothing can be said firmly.

Then followed some discussion on Dr. Mehta's question as to whether there was any significance in the different *gāyatrīs* of the various gods and goddesses.

As there was no more questions, Dr. Sastri was invited by the president to give his reply to the various points raised by the scholars in the course of discussion.

Dr. Sastri said that Śakti is often identified with the Śaktimān so that power and the powerful are regarded as one and the same. This view, in his opinion, is found in the conception of *Parā Vāk* and the Mīmāṁsakas admit Śakti as a particular entity. In this connection, he observed, "I am sure that the form of the Śakti cult, as we see now-a-days, is somewhat different from the cult of the Puranic age or of the Vedic age." As regards certain other questions, he said that he is not a student of history, but of Sanskrit literature.

The lunch interval then began at 1 P.M.

Afternoon Session

When the afternoon session of the Seminar began at 3 P.M. Prof. T. V. Mahāliṅgam read his paper on the "Evolution of the Cult of Śakti in Tamilnad." Prof. B. P. Sinha drew attention to the representation of the *cakra* as resembling Śiva's missile on sculptures of the 8th or 9th century A.D. and wanted to know if there was any literary evidence in its support.

In reply, Prof. Mahalingam said that, during the Pallava period in the 6th or 7th century A.D., Viṣṇu is found to be represented with a *triśūla.* There is inscriptional and sculptural evidence to prove the fact, he added.

Prof. D. C. Sircar asked whether there was any fundamental difference between the form of Śakti worship in South India and its counterpart in the North. Prof. Mahalingam said that there was such difference and referred to a South Indian feature of the worship of the Mother-goddess in which some of the devotees cut their limbs and offered them to the deity.

Prof. Sircar observed that the said feature has some similarity with certain practices of a form of Śiva worship known as the *Caḍak Pūjā* in Bengal.

Dr. R. N. Mehta then read his paper on the origin of the Śakti cult. Prof. B. P. Sinha asked whether the worship of Śakti developed in India under foreign influence. Prof. D. C. Sircar did not believe in the existence of foreign influence. He argued that motherhood is a universal concept, and, as such, the idea of the Mother-goddess may have developed in different countries independently.

In this connection, Prof. Sircar stressed on the names *Gaurī* (fair-complexioned), Aparṇā (without leaf-cloth) and Kālī (dark-skined) applied to the Indian Mother-goddess and said that the deities may have been originally worshipped respectively by the Mongoloid Xanthoderms of the Himalayas, the naked aboriginals like the Nagna-Śabaras and the dark-complexioned Proto-Australoids.

Dr. Mehta was not sure as to whether there existed any foreign influence. Dr. Banerjea gave his own arguments in supporting Prof. Sircar's views. He said that, unless there is any positive evidence, one cannot be difinite about the existence of foreign influence on the Śakti cult.

Then Sri N. N. Bhattacharya read his paper on "Śāktism and Mother-right", and Sri K. S. Behera's paper on "Evolution of Śakti Cult at Jajpur, Bhubaneswar and Puri" was also read. A question arose as to whether the goddess Stambheśvarī, mentioned in Orissan epigraphs, has to be identified with the goddess Kālī. Prof. D. C. Sircar observed that the goddess worshipped in the form of a pillar or post and first known from an inscription of the sixth century A.D. may be regarded as an aspect of the Mother-goddess, but should not be identified with Kālī. He referred to the well-known stanza in which Śivā and Nārāyaṇī are identified and said that this is merely a theoretical identification.

Sri A. K. Bhattacharya then read his paper in which he emphasised the Nonaryan characteristics of the Devī especially as Vindhyavāsinī. Prof. Sircar pointed out that the Bhrāmarī aspect of the Mother-goddess worshipped in the Vindhyan forests as referred to in the *Rājataraṅgiṇī* should have been mentioned by Sri Bhattacharya.

Then Sri P. K. Majumdar's paper on "Śakti Worship in Rājasthān" and Prof. D. C. Sircar's article on "Śakti Cult in Western India" were read one after another, because they were expected to cover more or less the same ground. On questions being invited, Sri Behera wanted to know whether the female deities of Rajasthan have any connection with child. The reply given by Sri Majumdar was in the negative. Sri Majumdar further said that, when a temple is built in Rajasthan, all the *Mātṛkās* are placed there and, if images of all of them are not available, at least any one should be there. In reply to another question, he added that Gaṇeśa and Vīrabhadra are worshipped along with the *Mātṛkās*.

Next Dr. Sm. Bela Lahiri read her paper on the Śakti Cult as revealed by certain medieval coins of North-Eastern India.

Dr. A. N. Lahiri then read a paper on the representation of the composite Ardhanārēśvara form of Śiva and Parvatī on a coin of king Vijayamāṇikya (sixteenth century) of Tripurā.

Prof. B. P. Sinha next read his paper on "The Evolution of Śakti Worship in India." He posed the question as to why the Mother-goddess was less important in the Vedic texts and why, since the eighth century or so, various aspects of the goddess gained so much importance. In reply, Prof. D. C. Sircar pointed out that it was due to the gradual absorption of Nonaryan ideas and blood by the Aryans that the Mother-goddess became more and more important in the socio-religious life of the composite people of post-Vedic India.

After some more discussion, the session closed at 5 P.M.

Reported by—

Sri R. K. Bhattacharyya and
Dr. Sm. B. Bhattacharyya.

I

The Cult of Śakti[1]

G. Sastri, Sanskrit College, Calcutta

I am thankful to you for asking me to inaugarate the Seminar on Śaktism organised by the Centre of Advanced Study in Ancient Indian History and Culture. I have never been a student of History proper ; still Dr. Ray, the Director, chose me for this honour ; possibly he had at the back of his mind the little studies that I have been carrying on in the field of Philosophy and Religion. Naturally I do not know how far it will be possible for me to do justice to the subject and satisfy the learned historians assembled here this morning.

The beginning of Śakti worship is traditionally traced back to the Vedic age. And though it must be admitted that the peculiar nature of the Vedic literature from the age of the Saṁhitās to the period of the Upaniṣads renders our task of tracing the evolution of Śakti much more difficult, yet it is possible for us to mark out an outline of its different stages from the simple cenception of 'agencies of divine powers' manifested in the physical operations of Nature to the complex and abstract notion of one 'Divine Creative Power' operating in the production and government of the Universe. Although the idea of one supreme Śakti as a full-blooded theological principle evolving the inner and outer world of thought and reality in cojunction with a male counterpart, either Śiva or Viṣṇu, as in the later schools of Kasmir Śaivism and Bengal Vaiṣṇavism, is scarcely conceived in this literature, it is nevertheless possible to trace the first origin of this tendency in the hymns of the *Ṛgveda,* the contents of the Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣads.

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[1] The revised copy of the paper was received on the 27th October, 1965.—Ed.

The play of elemental forces of nature, sometimes terrible and sometimes soothing, led the Vedic seers to the belief of the presence and agency of many 'divine powers'. But the imaginative faculty of these seers was stimulated in such a way that they did not look upon them as regular physical facts, but depicted them as functions of various gods or divine agents presiding over the various departments of nature. Out of these various cosmic functions of gods, such as Indra, Varuṇa, Agni, etc., slowly emerges the notion of Śakti or Divine Power, not surely conceived as a single category but in a pluralistic sense. Looked at from this point of view everyone of the principal gods in the Vedic pantheon may be regarded as a basis of Śakti. Thus, for instance, Agni is specifically described in the *Ṛgveda* as having three functions ; first, as heat-energy manifested not only in culinary or sacrificial fire, but also in his terrestrial operation as the energy of gastric fire, life and vegetative growth ; second, in his operation in the atmosphere as the energy of lightning ; and third, in his celestial operation as light and solar energy in the sun, the dawn and the different planetary bodies. If the idea of these special functions or powers of operations is taken away from the conception of Agni, he almost immediately loses his specific character as a Vedic deity.

It may be mentioned in this context that the individual characteristics of the different gods of the Vedic pantheon are not always well-defined. Often do we find the same functions attributed to different gods ; but, in spite of this, it is quite possible to understand the personality of one deity and the character of each principal god which has for its nucleus a conception of certain *Śaktis*. It will be quite in the fitness of things to state here that the term *Śacī* was more commonly used in this period of Vedic literature for the term *Śakti*—it is mentioned about thirty times—and it may be possible that in the notion of *Śacī*, however crude and simple, that we find the first faint glamour of the divine *Śakti* principle at the earliest stage of formation. But it is beyond all vestiges of doubt that the process of conceiving *Śakti* as something separate from and yet acting in close association with their male counter-parts as in later times, has not begun.

From a study of the references to Śakti in the *Ṛgveda*, where it is used nearly a dozen times, it is understood that the word *Śakti* conveys the ideas of the powers of (i) generation and (ii) fertilization. In the philosophical sense this idea of generation, meaning 'to give birth to the world of names and forms', played an important part in the post-Vedic connotation of Śakti as the 'female creative principle' fashioning the world out of her womb (*sarvaprapañcajananī*).

In tracing the evolution of the Śakti idea, it is impossible to skip over the Ṛgvedic hymns alluding to the Jñās. *Jñā*, meaning women, occurs in the *Ṛgveda* about seventeen or eighteen times. Though the traditional interpretation of the term *Jñā* varies, still it is maintained that Jñā belongs to the pre-historic stage of thought when male nature powers were beginning to be associated with female energies. Thus whereas the Ṛgvedic Śacīs represent divine powers as the deified nature of functions of the male gods forming an essential element in the constitution of the latter's personalities, the Jñās are distinctly separate principles of female energy acting in association with their male counterparts. In the Brāhmaṇas however the term *Jñā* does not seem to occur so frequently as in the Vedic hymns. Here in the

Brāhmaṇas all the different forms of Jñā divinities have been brought under the single head of Vāc who is regarded as the most typical representative of the Jñā type. The idea of Vāc as the Mantra-Mother, giving birth to her three-fold progeny of *Ṛk*, *Sāman* and *Yajus*, is of great importance. Already in the *Ṛgveda* (X. 100. 35) we find Vāc conceived as the acting power of Brahman proceeding from him. It is interesting to note that in this hymn, though Vāc retains her functions of bestowing wealth and protection originally belonging to her as a goddess of the Jñā type, still the individual characters of the various Jñā divinities seemed to have merged into her. Here she emerges as the sole principle of creative energy. Soon after in the Brāhmaṇas we find that she actually takes her place by the side of Prajāpati, the father of creation, as his Śakti. It is in fact nothing but this Vedic idea of Vāc giving birth to the *mantras* as her progeny that worked under the Āgamic influence of the early Tantras and finally gave rise in the circle of Trika philosophers in the idea of Mātṛkā Śakti, the Mantra-Mother or the Parā Vāc or Supreme Logos.

It is only in the Upaniṣads that the Brāhmaṇa conception of the female Vāc bringing forth the creatures in union with the male Prajāpati finally culminates in the more developed conception of a Supreme Śakti belonging to God himself hidden in its own self. If we leave out the *Śvetāśvatara*, we find that in the ten or twelve principal Upaniṣads the word *Śakti* is not directly mentioned. It is, therefore, that the writers on Śaivism or Vaiṣṇavism frequently quote from the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, but seldom from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* or *Muṇḍaka*, etc., to prove the Vedic origin of the doctrine of Śakti. It is for this reason that, in the Trika School of Kashmir, Puṇyānanda quotes several *Śvetāśvatara* verses, while the Bengal School of Vaiṣṇavism draws from the same

Upaniṣad to trace the origin of the Śakti conception of Vedic literature.

Of course, the thinkers of the Epic period did never for a moment forget that the Impersonal Absolute of the Upaniṣads is the only one ultimate Reality. But this Impersonal Absolute cannot possibly serve as the object of worship. Average human intelligence cannot grasp the full significance of the transcendent conception of the un-individualised Brahman. Empirically, it may be regarded as a mere abstraction. So, in the hands of the pristine theists, the Impersonal Absolute gradually came to be invested with a distinct personality; and the Śāktas of the later age accepted this conception of a Personal God, whom they preferred to affiliate with Śakti, the Divine Power.

Some other scholars, again, maintain that the Śakti cult was a direct development of the Upaniṣadic *Upāsanās*, while the devotional practices of the Śāktas have gradually 'galvanised them into a living system by incorporating with them popular mythology and national imagination'. The beginnings of Śakti worship is traditionally traced back to the *Devīsūkta*, a hymn of the *Ṛgveda* (X. 125), where Vāc, the enlightened daughter of the seer Ambhṛṇa, speaks out in the fullness and enthusiasm of her knowledge, identifying herself with the Primal Energy of life. Next in the *Nārāyaṇa Upaniṣad* (belonging to the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*) we find a hymn in the form of a *Gāyatrī* addressed to this Divine Energy (*T. A.*, 10. 1). Curiously enough, she has been called here *Kanyākumārī* and *Durgi.* In another hymn of the same work (*Nār. Up.*, II. 2), she has been addressed as *Durgā*, and has been described as a 'flaming goddess', associated with the Universal Self, and worshipped by the devotees for the sake of material gain here and hereafter. She also delivers the aspirants after their liberation from the cycle of existences. To be brief, she plays the part of *Brahmavidyā.* In the *Kena Upaniṣad* (III. 12), we find her as a Divine Female, Umā Haimavatī, appearing before the minor gods to impart to them the esoteric knowledge of the Supreme Being ; and, in his commentary, Śaṅkarācārya actually identifies Her with *Brahmavidyā.*

Coming to the Epic period, we find mention of the Śakti worship in several books of the *Mahābhārata* (Vanaparvan, Ch. 39, verses 4, 72 ; Virāṭa, Ch. 6 ; Bhīṣma, Ch. 23, etc.). Various epithets are given to Her—Durgā, Umā, Pārvatī, Caṇḍī, Kālī, Mahākālī, Bhadrakālī, Kapālī, Kātyāyanī, Kṛṣṇā, Jayā, Vijayā, Kumārī, Karālī, Kauśikī, Śākambharī, Skandamātā, Sarasvatī, Sāvitrī, Svāhā, Svadhā, Brahmavidyā, Māyā, Mahānidrā, etc. She has been often described as the fierce 'Black Goddess' of destruction, the sister of Kṛṣṇa, the slayer of the demon Mahiṣa and the dweller in the Vindhya mountains.

In the Purāṇas, specially in the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, she appears as the centre of the great Śakti cult. The *Devīmāhātmya* or the celebrated work containing an account of the greatness of the Great Goddess Caṇḍikā, is a section of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa.* It is more commonly known as the *Saptaśatī* or the *Caṇḍī.* Therein is to be found the conception of the Supreme Godhead as the embodiment of the Cosmic Energy.

The Śākta conception of the Great Goddess in the fourth or the transcendental state broadly corresponds to that of the Impersonal Absolute Brahman of the monistic Upaniṣads. But in the entire literature of the Śākta Tantras, very little stress has been laid on the static transcendental aspect of the unqualified Absolute. It is the dynamic aspect of Godhead—the active manifestation of a personal Deity in the form of Divine Energy, with which the Śākta Tantras are directly concerned. The thin abstractions of the Upaniṣads have failed to satisfy the many-sided needs and activities of the devoted Śāktas ; and accordingly they have found it necessary to transform the Impersonal Absolute into a personal Divinity—the omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient Śakti. To the Śāktas, no idea can be more sublime than the conception of the personal God as the Divine Mother—the source, support and end of the entire empirical universe. And from the point of view of religion, support for it is not wanting in the Upaniṣads even.

With these words, friends, I invite you to the Seminar and let me hope that your deliberations will throw welcome light on the different phases and aspects of the evolution of the cult of Śakti and the nature and content of the influence it has been exerting on the cultural image of India in the long course of her history.

II

The Cult of Śakti in Tamilnad[1]

T. V. Mahalingam, Madras University

The cult of Śakti in one or other of her different manifestations and forms has been widely popular in India through the ages. Literary and archaeological evidence suggests that her cult was the result of the fusion of several cults with their local ramifications, but based on similar mythological conceptions. It has two aspects, the dynamic or the ferocious aspect and the benign or the beneficient aspect. In her ferocious aspect she is differently called Caṇḍī, Cāmuṇḍā, Kālī, Kapālinī, Satī, etc., and, in her benign aspect, Bhavānī, Vijayā, Devī, Umā, Gaurī, etc., though all of them became fused in course of time into a single goddess, the consort of Śiva. This process or coalescence of different elements into the one great goddess was neither sudden nor sweeping, but a gradual one that took many centuries for completion. The existence of a sort of disparity among the different elements of the goddess even so late as the Gupta period is evident from the *Dēvīmāhātmya.*[2] In the development of beliefs regarding her varied aspects and the process of the coalescence of various local divinities into a homogeneous goddess different regions in India have contributed their share ; and among them the Tamil country in the extreme south is not the least significant.

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[2] The *Dēvīmāhātmya* is a part of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* and assignable to about the fourth century A.D. See V. S. Agrawala, *The Glorification of the Great Goddess*, p. iv.

The currency of the Śakti cult in its different aspects in Tamilnad even in the early centuries of the Christian era is amply indicated in early Tamil literature—the Śaṅgam Classics. Among the many names of Śakti in these works are Amarī, Kumārī, Gaurī, Śamari, Śūlī, Nīlī, Aiyai (Āryā), Śeyyavaḷ, Koṛṛavai, Nallāḷ, Kaṇṇi, Śaṅkarī, etc. Of these the name Kumārī may be taken to indicate her virgin character. It is of interest in this connection to note the remarks of the author of the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (*circa* 60-80 A.D.) about her worship in the extreme South of India : "Beyond this there is another place called Comari at which are the Cape of the Comari and a harbour ; hither come those men who wish to consecrate themselves for the rest of their lives, and bathe and dwell in celibacy and women also do the same ; for it is told that a goddess once dwelt here and bathed."[3] Obviously this is a reference to the goddess of Kanyākumārī in the extreme south of the peninsula. The main features of her worship are well borne out by the evidence. The *Mahābhārata* narrates that "as Gaurī, she (Durgā) is the sister of Vāsudeva and in this form she inhabits the southern mountains."[4] This virgin goddess of the south—Kanyākumārī—has been identified with the Śakti of Śiva in the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka.*

Besides revealing her marked Śaiva associations the Śaṅgam literature refers to a few other aspects of Śakti and describes in some detail her iconographic features. Koṛṛavai was clearly recognised to be the consort of Śiva ; and this is apparent from reference to her in the *Perumbāṇāṛṛuppaḍai*[5] and *Tirumurugāṛṛuppaḍai.*[6] The former calls her the great mother of Muruga and the latter describes Muruga as the son of *Malaimagaḷ* (i.e., Pravatakanyā or Pārvatī).

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[3] Schoff, *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, p. 46.

[4] Hopkins, *Epic Mythology*, p. 224.

[5] Lines 457-59.

[6] Lines 258-59.

According to the *Tolkāppiyam*, the earliest Tamil grammatical work, Koṟṟavai was the goddess of the region of Pālai. The Eyiṉar of Pālai worshipped her and sacrificed buffaloes at her temple. Peacocks and parrots, fowls, sandal, grains and oblations of rice with flesh and blood were offered to her, the *Śilappadikāram* adds.[7] Her heir was matted; her apparel consisted of skins of a tiger and a cobra and her ornaments included the carved tusk of the boar in the hair like a crescent, string of tiger's teeth, bow, drums, pipes, etc., while a stag was her vehicle. The *Śilappadikāram* says that she was so much dreaded that when once the doors of her shrine could not be opened the Pāṇḍya king felt that it was due to the divine displeasure and sought her mercy by the grant of the revenue of two villages for her worship.[8] She is described in the *Perumbāṇāṟṟuppaḍai*[9] as *Tunaṅgaiyamcelvi*, *i.e.*, one who dances the *tunaṅgai* dance. That she was taught a few poses in dancing by she-devils is gleaned from the *Kalittogai*[10] and the *Tolkāppiyam*.[11] The *Śilappadikāram*[12] speaks of a particular variety of her dance called *marakkālāṭṭam* during which she assumed legs of wood and fought with the *asuras*. The *Padiṟṟuppattu* speaks of her as a goddess of victory—*Veṟṟimaḍantai*—with her shelter in the *Vākai* tree. The *Kuṟuntogai* calls her Śūli, i.e., the wielder of the trident.[13]

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[7] XII. 22-39.

[8] XX. 37-40 and XXIII. 113-125.

[9] Line 459.

[10] 89. 8

[11] Meyp., Sūtra 12, Per.

[12] VII. 59.

[13] 218. 1.

The description of the goddess as Araṇyānī or the goddess of forests in the *Ṛgveda* (X. 146) is found reflected in early Tamil literature. She is spoken of as the denizen of the forest and called *Kānamarśelvi* in the *Ahanāṇūṛu*,[14] *Kāḍuraikaḍavuḷ* in the *Porunarāṛṛuppaḍai*,[15] and *Kāḍamarśelvi* in the *Maṇimēkalai*, while according to the *Iraiyaṇār Ahappoṛuḷ* and the commentary of Pērāśiriyar on the *Tolkāppiyam* there was in the *Paripāḍal* a poem on *Kaḍukal* which is taken to be a corruption of *Kaḍukiḷal* which according to the *Takkayāgapparaṇi* was the same as *Kānanadi* or Vana-Durgā. The forest goddess had a few more names like *Mōti* and *Karitāy* (the black mother). In the *Maṇimēkalai* she is described as standing with a beggar's bowl alleviating the hunger of the devils. Her temple is adjacent to the burial ground and has gates on the four sides and an altar in the middle. In the *Poruḷatikāram* of the *Tolkāppiyam* she is mentioned as *Kāḍukeḷucelvi* in connection with the celebration of the *Paraṇināl* on the second day of the lunar month and honoured with the *tunaṅgai* dance. Interestingly there are certain evil aspects of the forest spirit also. The story of Kōvalan's departure to Madurai with Kaṇṇaki through a forest and the unsuccessful attempt of a forest spirit to win him over, narrated in the *Śilappadikāram*, is an example. The much later devotional hymns of the *Tēvāram* collection also allude to the forest aspect of Durgā.

A good account of the nature of Durgā's cult and her iconography is found in the *Veṭṭuvavari* in the *Śilappadikāram*. She is described as "having a body, the colour (dark blue) of which resembles that of a flower of the *kaya* (Memecylon edule), lips red like the coral, teeth white and the neck dark, with a third eye on the crescent like forehead, holding the discus and conch, sword and *śūla* (spear) and the bow which was the *mēṛu* (*neḍumalai*) strung with the snake Vāsuki as its *ñān* (bow-string), wearing the skin of a tiger and a belt (*mekalai*) of lion's skin, a *kaḻal* (hero's calf-band) on one leg and *śilambu* (woman's anklet) on the other, with a coiffure of *jaṭā* adorned by a serpent and the crescent moon, covering herself with the hide of the elephant as *uttarīya* (*ēkāśam*), wearing a snake as her breast-band (*kaccu*), carrying a standard of lion (*āḻikkoḍi*)."[16] The form of Durgā standing on the severed head of a buffalo—a form which is often met with in her South Indian sculptural representations from early times—is also described in the *Śilappadikāram*.[17] The same work speaks also of her fight with the *asuras*, her killing Dāruka and Mahiṣāsura, kicking the *śakaṭa* and walking over the *marudam* (Arjuna) tree. Her swallowing poison in the manner of Śiva and her making him dance also find mention in it. She is also described as occupying half the body of Śiva which is a clear indication of the Ardhanārī concept. All these details and descriptions unmistakably point to the Śaiva character of her cult in the first few centuries of the Christian era.

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[14] 345. 3-7.

[15] Line 52.

In spite of such almost prolific literary references to the cult of Śakti in Tamilnad the earliest sculptural representations of and extant shrines dedicated to her are not earlier than the seventh century A.D. It appears that before the beginning of the seventh century temples were built with impermanent material which could not withstand the ravages of time, and it was Pallava Mahendravarman (610-630 A.D.) who heralded the fresh movement of carving out shrines in live rocks. In his Mandagappattu cave inscription, this king proudly declares that he carved out a shrine for the Trimūrti without the use of the traditional material like brick, timber, metal or mortar and calls himself *Vicitracitta* or the curious or inventive minded.[18] It can therefore be presumed that temples for Durgā were built even in the pre-Pallava days and that they were made of perishable material that have succumbed to the ravages of time. In fact, in the story of *Śakkravāḷakkōṭṭam* in the *Maṇimēkalai* we hear of a temple (*kōṭṭam*) for Durgā. Of the Pallava monuments the Kōḍikālmaṇḍapam at Mahabalipuram, stylistically assignable to the period of Māmalla Narasimhavarman I (630-668) and his son Paramēśvaravarman I (670-690), appears to be intended for Durgā as may be gleaned from the bas-relief sculptures of *dvārapālikās* flanking the shrine entrances.[19] The *Yāḷi-maṇḍapam* (Tiger Cave) of the time of Rājasiṁha Narasiṁhavarman II (690-727) at Saluvankuppam near Mahabalipuram is also considered to be dedicated to Durgā in view of the *vyāḷa* frieze in the facade of the cave. Of the cut-out monoliths at Mahabalipuram the Draupadīratha was clearly intended for Durgā as is evident from the carved image of her in the hind wall of the shrine. Besides these temples which were her own, Pallava sculptures of Durgā are found in the rock-cut caves at Singavaram, Vallam and the Varāha-maṇḍapa, Mahiṣamardanī, Trimūrti and Ādivarāha caves at Mahabalipuram. There are faint indications of a panel in the Rāmānuja-maṇḍapa at the same place which suggest that there was once a sculpture of Durgā with attendants which was chiselled off later. Besides, a small boulder near the Atiraṇacaṇḍa cave at Saluvankuppam has the carving of a Mahiṣāsuramardanī while an eight-armed Durgā is noticed in the hind wall of a small rock-cut cell near the Shore Temple at Mahabalipuram. Images of Durgā are encountered in the structural temples of the period as well, *viz.*, the Kailāsanātha, Muktīśvara and Mataṅgēśvara at Kanchipuram.

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[16] *Journal of the Madras University*, Vol. XXXII, No. 1, p. 152.

[17] XX. 34-35.

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[18] *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XVII, p. 17.

[19] K. R. Srinivasan, *Cave Temples of the Pallavas*, p. 109, Plate XXXI, A, B and C.

A study of these images of the Pallava period do not reveal any iconographic rigidity. They are both with and without attendants. Excepting the examples at the Ādivarāha cave temple at Mahabalipuram and the Raṅganātha Cave at Singavaram which stand in pleasing *tribhaṅga*, the rest are in *samabhaṅga*. Excepting the examples at the Trimūrti and Ādivarāha cave temples which are eight-armed, the rest are invariably four-armed. When the arms are four the upper right holds a *prayogacakra* and the upper left a *śaṅkha*, the lower right is in *abhaya* or rests on the thigh under the girdle and the lower left is placed on the hip in the *kaṭyavalambita* pose. The four additional weapons held by the eight-armed images are *khaḍga*, *dhanus*, *ghaṇṭā* and *khēṭaka*. The carving in the Ādivarāha cave temple is unique as its front right arm holds a cup and on the front left is perched a parrot. Besides weapons in hands a long *śūladhvaja* is also noticed above the right side of the goddess. The Pallava Durgās stand either on the severed head of a buffalo as at Singavaram, the Ādivarāha and Trimūrti caves and the exterior of the Draupadīratha at Mahabalipuram or simply on a *padmapīṭha* as in the Varāhamaṇḍapa and the image in the hind wall of the shrine in the Draupadīratha. These iconographic variations clearly demonstrate that there was a wide experimentation in this formative stage in the history of South Indian plastic art.

Besides this conventional form of Durgā her other aspects are also met with among Pallava icons. Her fight with Mahiṣāsura, the perennial theme of early Indian sculptors, was not ignored by the Pallava *sthapatis* who have immortalised the epic story in the famous panel in the Mahiṣamardanī cave at Mahabalipuram. She is shown as Siṁhavāhinī in the structural temple of Kailāsanātha at Kanchipuram and in a rock-cut specimen at Panamalai, both of the time of Rājasiṁha Narasiṁhavarman II. In some places the lion is shown as standing by her side.

An interesting aspect of the Durgā cult as exemplified by extant sculptures of the Pallava period is her marked association with Viṣṇu during that period in contrast to the essentially Śaiva orientation of het cult during the Śaṅgam age. In fact, even the *Śilappadikāram*, which is considered to be a late Śaṅgam work, calls her *Mālavarkkilaṅgilai*,[20] *i.e.*, the younger sister of Viṣṇu. The combinations of Mahiṣamardanī with Anantaśāyin in the Mahiṣamardanī cave at Mahabalipuram and the Raṅganātha cave at Singavaram, the proximity of Durgā to the shrine of Viṣṇu in the Trimūrti cave, the depiction of her images in closeness with Trivikrama in the Varāhamaṇḍapa and Bhūvarāha in the Ādivarāha cave temple, all again at Mahabalipuram, appear to have some significance. The same norm was followed in the Pāṇḍya and Muttaraiyar caves farther south, as may be seen from the examples at Tiruttangal and Malaiyadippatti.[21]

It was during this period in South India that Śaṅkarācārya appears to have flourished. Though not a *Śākta* in the sectarian sense, he was in all probability the author of the *Saundaryalaharī*, a well known ode to the goddess. He is credited with the reformation and systematisation of the six creeds of Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava, Gāṇapatya, Kaumāra, Saura and Śākta which earned for him the name *Śaṇmatasthāpanācārya.* His *bhāṣya* on the *Gītā* seems to suggest that he practised Śākta *yoga.* It is likely that a few repulsive practices like human sacrifice which were associated with Śakti worship were discouraged by Śaṅkara.

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[20] VI. 59.

[21] *Journal of the Madras University*, Vol. XXXII, No. 1, p. 154.

In the structural temples built towards the end of the Pallava rule as at the Muktīśvara at Kanchipuram and Vīraṭṭānēśvara at Tiruttani, Durgā occupies a niche in the northern wall of the *ardhamaṇḍapa* (vestibule) in front of the shrine. This is in conformity with the injunction in the *Vaikhānasa Āgama* and followed throughout the subsequent ages. In every Śiva temple of the Cōḷa and Vijayanagar periods, Durgā is seen in the *devakoṣṭha* of the northern wall of the *ardhamaṇḍapa* though her iconographic traits betray slight regional and chronological changes.

It may be said that, with the decline of the Pallava hegemony and the rise of the Cōḷa empire under Vijayālaya (850-870) and Āditya (870-907), the cult of Durgā entered a new phase. The Tiruvalangadu plates of Rājēndracōḷa[22] aver that Vijayālaya built at Tanjore a temple for Niśumbhasūdanī, an aspect of Durgā in which she is said to have triumphed over the demon Niśumbha. The image which was consecrated by Vijayālaya is still extant and shows the goddess with four hands, the upper right holding a trident in the attitude of piercing the demon below and with an elaborate *jaṭābhāra*, a garland of skulls (*muṇḍamālā*) worn as a *yajñōpavīta* and a serpent as *kucabanda.* This Niśumbhasūdanī aspect of Durgā appears to have been popular during the early Cōḷa period and plastic representations of this theme are encountered even in miniature bas-reliefs tucked underneath the pilasters of the exterior of the *garbhagṛha* of the temples at Punjai, Pullamangai and Tirukkarugavur, all in the Tanjore District.

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[22] *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. III, No. 205, v. 46; see Plates I and II.

Invariably the early Cōḷa Durgās are eight-armed in the fashion of the Pallava specimen in the Ādivarāha cave temple at Mahabalipuram and are in pleasing *tribhaṅga*, a curious exception being the sculpture in the Nāgēśvarasvāmī temple at Kumbakonam, which is four-armed. They also stand on the severed head of a buffalo and hold the *cakra*, *śaṅkha*, *khaḍga*, *dhanus*, *ghaṇṭā* and *khēṭaka* in the three upper pairs of arms while the lower pair is generally in the *abhaya* and *kaṭyavalambita* poses. The Pallava practice of providing a long shaft surmounted by a trident in the form of a *śūladhvaja* persists almost throughout the early Cōḷa period. In the later examples she is shown with six, five and four arms, the upper arms holding the conch and discus in the conventional fashion and the rest carrying other weapons or attributes.[23] Though she is invariably found with *karaṇḍamakuṭa*, instances depicting her with *kirīṭamakuṭa* emphasizing perhaps the Vaiṣṇava orientation of the goddess are not wanting.

A peculiar and interesting iconographic attribute of Durgā in Tamilnad, the like of which is not to be seen anywhere else in India, is the association of the stag or buck (*kalaimān*) with her. In the representation of Durgā in the Varāhamaṇḍapam and Ādivarāha cave temple at Mahabalipuram and in the Kailāsanātha temple at Kanchipuram, the stag is shown with the lion. In several early Cōḷa temples also the relief of the stag is found by the side of Durgā in the northern wall of the *ardhamaṇḍapa*. A remarkable sculpture of Durgā of the early Cōḷa period, now on display in the Government Museum, Madras, shows the stag prominently as if it is her mount. Some of the literary descriptions like the *Pāykalaippāvai* and *Kalaippariurdi* reveal that the darting deer was her mount. The *Tēvāram* and the *Kamba-Rāmāyaṇam* of a much later period also allude to Durgā's stag.

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[23] Invariably in these specimens the lower pair of arms is in *abhaya* and *kaṭyavalambita*.

An ubiquitous form of Durgā worship in the Tamil country during the Pallava and early Cōḷa periods was the offering of *navakaṇḍam*, i.e., flesh from nine parts of the body. This was nothing but self-mutilation. In several panels of Durgā of the Pallava period, this act is vividly shown where the devotee is offering his own head by cutting it off piece by piece. That these are only plastic versions of a practice that appears to have been in vogue in ancient days is obvious from the descriptions of such acts in the *Śilappadikāram* and *Maṇimēkalai.* These works reveal that warriors paid this prize for the victory conferred by the goddess in response to their prayer. The *Maṇimēkalai* in particular speaks of a temple for Durgā in which there was a sacrificial altar surrounded by posts with truncated heads suspending.[24] Hundreds of memorial stones in several parts of South India point to the widespread nature of this ubiquitous practice. A slab with a late Pallava inscription containing the relief of a decapitated warrior with his right hand holding a sword and the left his mutilated head by its locks. The inscription mentions a certain Okkandanāgan Okkatindan Paṭṭi Pōttan and his cutting of his head as an offering for the goddess.[25] In the early Cōḷa images of Durgā also this self-mutilation is shown, but not so prominently as in the early Pallava cave temples. This representation is almost completely dispensed with in the later Cōḷa and Vijayanagar carvings of the goddess.

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[24] VI. 50-53.

[25] *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. XII, No. 106. See Plate III.

The concept of the *Mātṛ-gaṇa* or Divine Mothers is only one of the proliferations of the concept of Śakti. It is indeed significant that the cult of the Divine Mothers, which seems to have been popular in North India even during the Kuṣāṇa period as exemplified by extant plastic representations of them at Mathura,[26] attained popularity in the Tamil country only during the eighth century. The earlier cut-in caves and cut-out monoliths of the Pallavas which contain the carvings of many a deity are curiously devoid of the row of Mothers. The number of *Mātṛ-gaṇa* is not fixed in the earlier Purāṇas ; but the *praśastis* of the early Cāḷukya copper plates restrict them to seven. The *Sapta-mātṛkā* appear to be the favourite deities of the early Cāḷukyas and their cult seems to have spread to Tamilnad only during the eighth century.[27] The first sculptural representation of the *Mātṛkās* is to be seen in the Kailāsanātha temple at Kanchipuram. Very soon the cult seems to have spread widely and their sculptures are noticed in the Pāṇḍya and Muttaraiya cave temples at Tirugokarnam, Malaiyadippatti, Kunnattur and Tirukkalakkudi. As in other parts of India, the constituents of the *Sapta-mātrikā* group were Brāhmī, Māhēśvarī, Kaumārī, Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī, Indrāṇī and Cāmuṇḍā flanked by Gaṇēśa on one side and Vīṇādhara Dakṣiṇāmūrti or Vīrabhadra on the other.

It is learnt from an inscription of a Cōḷa Rājakēsarī that, during the reign of the Pallava king Dantivarman, a separate temple was constructed and dedicated to the *Sapta-mātṛkā* at Alambakkam in the Tiruchirapalli District.[28] Another temple of the *Mātṛikās* at Velacheri in the Chingleput District is mentioned in an epigraph of

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[26] V. S. Agrawala, *Brahmanical Images in Mathura Art*, pp. 59-60.

[27] *Journal of the Madras University*, Vol. XXXII, No. 1, pp. 154-56.

[28] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1909, No. 705.

Pārthivēndravarman.[29] But separate temples of this class of the *Mātṛkās* were extremely few though a miniature shrine for them as *Parivārālaya* was built in every Śiva temple from the later Pallava period onwards. In other words, it became an established fashion from the ninth century onwards to construct small shrines in the temple enclosure for eight attendant divinities waiting upon the main deity, viz., Sūrya, Candra,[30] Sapta-mātṛkā, Jyēṣṭhā, Gaṇēśa, Subrahmaṇya, Caṇḍikēśvara and Nandī. The first extant instance of this class appears to be the Vīraṭṭānēśvara temple at Tiruttani built during the reign of the last Pallava king Aparājita. The *Sapta-mātṛkā* were included in the list of *parivāradēvatās* till the 11th and 12th centuries; but, after that period, they seem to have been discarded.

Another aspect of the Śakti cult which was perhaps more popular in the Tamil country than anywhere else was that of Jyēṣṭhā. She was popularly known as Alakṣmī and the elder sister of Lakṣmī. The details of her worship are found in the *Baudhāyana Gṛhyasūtra* and her eightfold forms mentioned in the *Viṣṇudharmottara*. The Tamil Lexicon *Śēndan Divākaram*, assignable to the tenth century A.D., enumerates the eight Tamil names of Jyeṣṭhā, viz., Mugaḍi, Tauvai, Kālati, Mūdēvi, Kākkaikkoḍiyāḷ, Kaḷudai Vāhini, Śēṭṭai and Kēḍalanaṅgu.

Like the *Sapta-mātṛkā*, Jyeṣṭhā also is not to be seen in the earlier rock-cut caves of the Pallavas, but makes her appearance in the structural temple of Kailāsanātha at Kanchipuram.[31] That a rock-cut shrine for her was excavated in the year 773 A.D. is gleaned from a Pāṇḍya inscription. She was also one of the *parivāradēvatās* in early Cōḷa temples and had a miniature shrine for her. She was mainly worshipped for wording off evil.

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[29] *Ibid.*, 1911, No. 316; *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. III, No. 191.

[30] In rare instances Candra is replaced by Yama. See *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1903, No. 258; *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. VIII, No. 560.

[31] A rock-cut carving of Jyeṣṭhā is found in a shallow niche on

A hymn of the Vaiṣṇava saint Toṇḍaraḍippoḍi Āḷvār in the *Nālāyiradivyaprabandham* is of extreme interest as it makes a reference in derision to the cult of Jyeṣṭhā. The Āḷvār says that, when there is the great god Viṣṇu who confers boons, the people foolishly forget him and worship Jyeṣṭhā.[32] Toṇḍaraḍippoḍi Āḷvār appears to have flourished during the ninth century and his verses may perhaps be taken to be the signal for the decline of the cult of Jyeṣṭhā. Her worship lingered for another two hundred years and then disappeared.

The almost simultaneous disappearance of two forms of Śakti—the *Mātṛkā* group and Jyeṣṭhā—could not have been merely accidental. A study of South Indian temple architecture and cult icons would reveal that the disappearance of the cults of the *Mātṛkās* and Jyeṣṭhā in Tamilnad was closely preceded by the rise of a separate cult of Amman.

Though in the caves of Ellora and Elephanta separate shrines of Pārvatī are noticed such a provision was conspicuously absent in the Pallava and early Cōḷa temples. In the Pallava temples Pārvatī was worshipped only in company with Śiva and Skanda—in the Somaskanda form—and not separately. The early Cōḷa temple circuit, which had *parivārālayas* for the *Sapta-mātṛkā* and Jyeṣṭhā, had

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the northern side of the Vasantēśvara cave at Vallam, assignable to the reign of Mahēndravarman I. But this image is not coeval with the cave, but a subsequent addition. See K. R. Srinivasan, *Cave Temples of the Pallavas*, p. 64.

[32] *Divyaprabandham*, 880 ; *Tonḍaraḍippodi*, *Tirumalai*, 10.

none for Pārvatī. It may be remembered that even in the great Bṛhadīśvara temple at Tanjore the shrine for Pārvatī was not the construction of Rājarāja, but was added at a sebsequent date. Similarly, the Amman shrines in several early Cōḷa temples are not coeval with the main sanctum, but are later additions of an age in which the construction of Devī shrines had come into vogue. The earliest epigraphical reference to a shrine of Pārvatī is to be found in the Eṇṇāyiram inscription of Rājēndra.[33] As against the silence maintained by the Pallava and early Cōḷa inscriptions regarding separate Amman shrines the later Cōḷa records allude to them in considerable number.[34] In these inscriptions the Amman shrine is called Tirukkāmakkōṭṭam.[35] This movement of the building of Amman shrines heralded by the later Cōḷas was continued by the later Pāṇḍyas and the Vijayanagar and Nāyak rulers. As the Śiva temples throughout the country are referred to in inscriptions as Kailāsa or Mēru after the real abode of Śiva, the shrines in temples were named Tirukkāmakōṭṭam after *Kāmakōṭi* of Kanchipuram, an ancient *Śaktipīṭha* in South India. Thus with the development of the cult of Śakti and the movement for building separate shrines for her near the main sanctum having become a regular feature of the South Indian temple complex, her other forms like the *Mātṛkās* and Jyeṣṭhā had an almost natural decline.

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[33] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1917, No. 335. Also noteworthy is an inscription of Rājēndra (No. 22 of 1895) engraved on the wall of the Maṅgaḷāmbikā shrine in the Śiva temple at Kandiyur. The temple at Gangaikondacholapuram has an Amman shrine.

[34] *Ibid.*, 307 and 308 of 1901 ; 469, 577, 586 and 589 of 1905 ; 530 of 1908 ; 429 of 1912 ; 320 and 322 of 1914, ete.

[35] The evolution of the Amman shrine in the South Indian temple complex has been dealt with by K. R. Srinivasan in his *Tirukkāmakkōṭṭam* in the *Proceedings of the All-India Oriental Conference*, 1946.

Apart from the major strands of the Śakti cult a few minor aspects of the goddess like her numerous proliferations into village deities are not less interesting. The Cōḷa inscriptions speak of two different varieties of temples, *Śrīkōyil* and *Tirumuṟṟam*, respectively denoting the shrines for major gods like Śiva and Viṣṇu and for minor and village deities. The Ẹṇṇāyiṛam inscription of Rājēndra refers to the gods of the *śēris* (slums) which bears clear testimony to the existence of a minor pantheon. This pantheon largely consisted of different aspects of Durgā as is evident from the Cōḷa inscriptions. The Tanjore inscriptions alone mention such different varieties of Piḍāri as Kālappiḍāri, Puṇṇaittuṛainaṅgai Piḍāri, Poduvagai Ūruḍaiyāḷ Piḍāri, Kadurai Vaṭṭam Uḍaiyāḷ Piḍāri, Tiruvaḷuḍaiyāḷ Piḍāri, Kaḍugaḷ, etc.[36] Another record mentions Durgā Paramēśvarī and Ėmalattu Durgaiyār Ōmkārasundarī.[37] Two inscriptions from Tanjore speak of the setting up of two images, one of Kālappiḍāri and the other of Durgā Paramēśvarī each with four arms.[38]

The cult of Śakti is still prevalent in several parts of South India, where in villages she is differently called Kālī, Bhadrakālī, Mahākālī, Śellāṇḍi-amman, Draupadi-amman, etc., and worshipped in a traditional way often to the accompaniment of animal sacrifices. The list of numerous village goddesses who are but varied aspects of the same Śakti and are worshipped still in different parts of South India include Māri-amman, Pēcciyamman, Aṅkammā,

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[36] See Introduction to *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. II.

[37] *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, 1919, No. 207.

[38] *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. II, Nos. 79 and 81.

Muthyāḷammā, Bangārammā, Mātammā, Mātaṅgī, etc. Of these Māri-amman in Tamilnad and Polerammā in Andhra Pradesh are goddesses of smallpox and are considered to be responsible for cattle disease, drought and sickness. It is also supposed that Māriamman is a goddess of rain, the Tamil term *māri* meaning 'a shower.'

III

Śakti Cult and Coins of North-Eastern India

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It is a well-known fact that the cult of Śakti flourished in North-Eastern India, specially in Assam and Bengal, more than anywhere else. As has been shown by D. C. Sircar, Kāmarūpa finds a prominent place in all the early accounts of four Śākta Pīṭhas, and in the *Kālikā Purāṇa* account of the seven Pīṭhas, no less than three are located in Kāmarūpa, the seat of the goddess Kāmākhyā. My object here is to bring to the notice of scholars some coins of North-Eastern India which throw a flood of light on this point.

First of all, we shall make a brief survey of the coins of this region. There was actually no local coinage of Bengal before the end of the Gupta rule. After the decline of the Guptas two independent kingdoms were established in Bengal—one in Gauḍa with its capital at Karṇasuvarṇa and the other in Vaṅga-Samataṭa. It was only from this time that we come across the independent coinages of Bengal modelled on the gold issues of the late Imperial Guptas. Some of these coins bear the names of Jayanāga, Samācāradeva and Śaśāṅka. These were followed by a series of the so-called imitation Gupta coins, which are widely debased and differ from their Gupta prototypes in the depiction of the reverse deity, which is very interesting for our study. Gradually, further degeneration set in the coinage of Bengal till it was ultimately stopped before the advent of the Pālas. And it is curious that neither the Pālas nor their Sena successors are known to have issued any coin. Suddenly in the late medieval period—in the fifteenth century—we find again coins of some ephemeral

Hindu rulers of Bengal. These are the issues of the Danujamardana group of kings, which are modelled on those of the contemporary coinage of the Sulṭāns of Bengal. At a still later date, two other distinct regional coinages appear —one in Cooch Behar and the other in Tripurā, which were also struck on the same pattern.

The independent coinage of Assam does not start before the conquest of Kāmarūpa by the Ahoms about 1530 A.D. and the first Ahom coins which appear in 1543 were imitated from the contemporary coins of the Muhammadan kings of the Husainī dynasty. Besides these Ahom coins, there were in Assam the regional issues of Maṇipur, Kachar and Jayantīpur, also based on the same model.

The devices and legends on some of these coins are highly interesting in so far as they reveal the religious affiliations of the issuers concerned.

Now we shall take into account the coins of Bengal. The post-Gupta issues of Jayanāga and Samācāradeva depict the reverse goddess Lakṣmī, as on their Gupta prototypes, while those of Śaśāṅka show on the reverse the figure of Śiva with his *vāhana* Nandin, indicating his Śaivite affiliation. Next comes the series of the so-called imitation Gupta coins in debased gold from various places in East Bengal (now East Pakistan). They bear on the obverse the figure of the standing king as on the Archer-type of their Gupta counterparts, but on the reverse that of a goddess standing three quarters to the right, generally with eight hands, and sometimes with six. These coins were issued by some unknown rulers, viz. Sudhanyāditya, Pṛthuvīrya and others whose names are not legible. Some of these coins, including those of Sudhanyāditya, were discovered along with the coins of Samācāradeva and Śaśāṅka. On some coins of Sudhanyāditya, there is a tiny figure of a horse under the king's left arm, probably signifying the performance of a horse-sacrifice on the part of the king. It appears that the otherwise unknown ruler Sudhanyāditya declared independence immediately after the death of Śaśāṅka and performed a horse-sacrifice to commemorate his coronation. The cult of Śiva adhered to by Śaśāṅka was changed by Sudhanyāditya to that of Śakti. The goddess on the coins of the Sudhanyāditya group of rulers is depicted generally with eight hands and a long garland, probably made of skulls as suggested by N. K. Bhattasali. This garland of skulls, often very prominent, indicates that the goddess wearing it is a Tantric one. That the worship of an eight-armed goddess was very popular during the period under discussion is proved by the discovery from Deulbadi (Tippera) of the bronze image of an eight-armed goddess, called Sarvāṇī in the seventh century inscription incised thereon. This image, however, does not wear any garland of skulls and its iconographic features are, as pointed out by J. N. Banerjea, more like those of Bhadra-Kālī, Bhadra-Durgā, Ambikā, etc., although it is called Sarvāṇī in the inscription. From this time onwards Bengal and its contiguous areas of Bihar became the centre of Śakti worship. This is proved by the discovery of a large number of images relating to the Śakti cult from various places in Bengal and Bihar. It is not unlikely that the new line of Śākta rulers of Bengal headed by Sudhanyāditya was greatly responsible for the popularization of the cult of Śakti in this region.

The next Śākta rulers of Bengal, also known from coins alone, were Danujamardanadeva, Mahendradeva and Vijayanārāyaṇa. The coins of the first two rulers come from various places of Bengal and were issued from Pāṇḍunagara and Cāṭigrāma. While the coins of Danujamardanadeva and Mahendradeva are dated in the Śaka years 1339 and 1340 respectively, the date of Vijayanārāyaṇa's unique coin is problematic since it appears to read 1442 (?) in the alien Persian numerals and without any reference to the era it represents. The legends of all these coins, written in somewhat archaic Bengali characters, cover both sides of the coins—continuing from the obverse to the reverse. The most interesting part of these legends is that they invariably apply the epithet *Caṇḍī-caraṇa-parāyaṇa* to their issuers, indicating thereby that all of them were devout worshippers of Caṇḍī. It appears that all these Hindu rulers invoked the assistance of the warlike goddess Caṇḍī in their futile efforts to oust the Muhammadan conquerors of Bengal.

The coins of the Cooch Behar kings show that they were devout Śaivas, the legends of their coins describing them as *Śrī-śrī-Śiva-caraṇa-kamala-madhukara*. The traditional accounts of the rulers of Tripurā are given in the *Rājamālā*, and many of these kings are represented by their numismatic issues. Most of the legends of these coins indicate that their issuers were worshippers of the combined aspect of Śiva and Durgā, as suggested by epithets like *Śiva-Durgā-pada-rajo-madhupa* or simply *Śiva-Durgā-pade*. An interesting coin of Vijayamāṇikya which depicts the composite Ardhanārīśvara form of these two deities may be noted in this connection. At least two Tripurā kings, Ratnamāṇikya II and Durgāmāṇikya, declare themselves as worshippers of the goddess Kālī, so widely popular in all parts of Bengal. While Ratnamāṇikya bears the epithet *Kālikā-pada-padma-madhupa* on his coins dated Śaka 1607, Durgāmāṇikya simply states that he rests on the feet of Kālī (*Kālī-pade*) in his coins dated Śaka 1731. It is to be noted that the characteristic reverse device of the coins of all the Tripurā rulers is a lion with a *triśūla* on his back. This device is suggestive of the deities mentioned in the obverse legend—the lion representing *Siṁhavāhanā* Durgā and the *triśūla* on his back referring to her consort Śiva. Since, however, the lion is the more important part of the device, it appears that the Tripurā rulers were primarily Śakti-worshippers.

The gradual Hinduization of the Ahom rulers after their conquest of Assam is reflected on their coins. While their initial coinage bears legends in Ahom characters, their later issues generally have legends in Bengali-Assamese letters. Even the names of the later rulers became Sanskritized. Once they were taken into the fold of Hinduism, they professed their special allegiance to the combined aspect of Śiva and Śakti, named as Hara-Gaurī, by adopting epithets like *Śrī-śrī-Hara-Gaurī-pada-parāyaṇa*, *Śrī-śrī-Hara-Gaurī-padāmṛta-madhukara*, *Śrī-śrī-Hara-Gaurī-caraṇa-kamala-madhukara*, *Śrī-śrī-Hara-Gaurī-caraṇāravinda-makaranda-madhukara*, etc. Only one ruler, Rājeśvarasiṁha whose coins are dated Śaka 1675, bears the epithet *Śrī-śrī-Māheśvarī-caraṇa-kamala-makaranda-madhukara*, indicating thereby that he was a devotee of Māheśvarī, one of the *sapta-mātṛkā*.

The kings of Kachar were mostly worshippers of Hara-Gaurī, as revealed from their coins. But there is an interesting coin of the nineteenth and last king Govindacandra who describes himself as *Haiḍimba-pūradhīśa-śrī-Raṇacaṇḍī-padājuṣa*. Hiḍimbapura is evidently the ancient name of Kachar. The date of the coin is given in chronogram as Śaka 1736 (*aṅga-tri-adri-ku*). As to the goddess Raṇacaṇḍī mentioned in the coin, Captain Fisher notes that she was the Thakoorain of Kachar "who is adored under the symbol of a sword religiously preserved in the Rajbarri, and to the possession of which the most inexpressible importance is attached." This shows that the Kachar rulers were primarily worshippers of the Tantric goddess Caṇḍī in her warlike aspect (Raṇacaṇḍī), even though some of them bear the epithet *Hara-Gaurī-caraṇa-parāyaṇa* in their coin-legends. That the Kachar rulers were of foreign origin is proved by another epithet *Hācensā-vaṁśaja* (descendant of Ha-tsung-tsa) as applied to Yaśonārāyaṇadeva on his coins dated Śaka 1505. Thus it is clear that the Tantric cult of the Hindus which is known to be widely prevalent in the Kāmarūpa region had a special appeal to the hill peoples of India's north-eastern frontier like the Ahoms and the Kacharis, who were originally of non-Indian extraction.

The coins of the two other regions of Assam, viz. Jayantīpur and Maṇipur, indicate that their issuers were Śaivas and Vaiṣṇavas respectively. The rulers of Jayantīpur bear the epithet *Srī-śrī-Śiva-caraṇa-madhukara*, while Caurajitsiṁha of Maṇipur styles himself as *Śrīmad-Rādhā-Govinda-padāravinda-makaranda-mano-madhukara.*

IV

Links between Vaiṣṇavism and Śaktism[1]

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Śaktism, as is popularly understood, refers to the cult of Durgā and associated deities regarded either as consort of Śiva or at least included within the Śaivite pantheon. Śaktism in this sense seems on the whole to be unconnected with Vaiṣṇavism, the cult of Viṣṇu and his different manifestations. As a matter of fact the followers of the two sects in question sometimes came into conflict with one another. Yet the said religious dominations were in early times neither independent of each other nor were they altogether intolerant in their mutual dealings. On the other hand, many an intimate tie drew them together. The aim of this paper is to indicate, from a historical point of view, the intimate contact that subsisted between them in times long gone by.

One connecting link came from the conception of the Devī as the *yoga-nidrā* (contemplative trance) of Viṣṇu. The term Viṣṇumāyā, Viṣṇu's wondrous power, 'the beginningless cosmic principle which hides reality from the vision of man', appears as a well-known attribute of the Devī in literature, Śaktist as well as Viṣṇuite.

The Devī is described as the daughter of Vasudeva and the saviour of Baladeva and Kṛṣṇa. In many Purāṇic episodes she appears as a helper of the latter. The goddess that assisted Kṛṣṇa bears the name Ekānaṃśā. A goddess of the same name is represented in the *Matsya Purāṇa* as well as the *Kumārikā-khaṇḍa* of the *Skanda Purāṇa*, as an emanation from Pārvatī. The two Ekānaṃśās can hardly be distinguished from each other or from Durgā. The elements of resemblance are so striking that they unmistakably point to the identity of the three. The Devī of the Kṛṣṇite legends, therefore, can hardly be any other goddess but Durgā, round whom the Śākta movement has centred.

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[1] The author of the paper did not attend the Seminar. It was taken as read.—Ed.

In the opinion of the present writer, the introduction of Durgā in the accounts of Kṛṣṇa's childhood (*Bālacarita*) had its origin in the desire of Vaiṣṇavism to ally itself with her cult. Durgā became an object of daily worship with the Vaiṣṇavas. She retained this position at least as late as the time of Varāhamihira (sixth century A.D.). The manner of her representation in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* of Varāha reminds us of Kṛṣṇa's sister Subhadrā. Unlike the Devī referred to above, Subhadrā does not figure prominently in early Viṣṇuite literature as an element of any importance in the *Bālacarita*. The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* is silent about her. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* does not include her in its list of the members of the family of Kṛṣṇa and Pāṇḍu. On the other hand, Ekānaṃśā-Durgā appears in both of them evidently in a position of importance. The famous city of Purī where Subhadrā receives worship in the great shrine appears to have been once a renowned home of Śaktism. The *Puruṣottamamāhātmya* confirms this claim. The contents of this work seem to represent Vaiṣṇavism as it prevails in the shrine of Jagannātha at Puruṣottama or Purī as a superstructure on a Śāktist foundation. Subhadrā and Baladeva, at all events, appear as late arrivals there. In the conception of Subhadrā, in her ritual as well as in her hymns, there is a distinct note of Śaktism. It is therefore suggested that the cult of Subhadrā was superimposed on that of Durgā.

We have seen the Devī figuring as a sister of Kṛṣṇa, the most famous amongst the incarnations of Viṣṇu. We also find her represented as the Śakti, wondrous power, of Viṣṇu. The terms Nārāyaṇī and Vaiṣṇavī seem to be reminiscent of this aspect of interrelation of the two deities. Śaktist literature represents Jagannātha and Cakrapāṇi as the Bhairavas of Vimalā and Caṇḍī. Evidence of the Purāṇas makes it clear that Cakrapāṇi is to be identified only with a form of Viṣṇu.

Further more the Devī. in some of her manifestations, is represented as the mother of Viṣṇu. There is evidence to show that the tradition in point was not confined to the realm of mythology alone.

Śaktism retained its reverence for Viṣṇu even after its affiliation to Śaivism. Some of its scriptures resound with the praise of Viṣṇu who sometimes appears invested with eminence greater than Śiva himself. On the other hand persons of the greatest importance are referred to in Viṣṇuite literature as invoking the assistance of Durgā. She is represented as an object of worship in Vaiṣṇava shrines. Her influence permeates important texts of Vaiṣṇavism. She is even made to preside over Vaiṣṇava *mantras*.

In its wider sense Śaktism represents the cult of female deities in general. Even from this point of view, too, its influence is traceable in Vaiṣṇavism. One of its earliest gifts was Śrī. This consort of Viṣṇu seems to be identical with Kamalā, the tenth and last of the *Daśamahāvidyās*, the ten manifestations of the great goddess, the consort of Śiva. The early Vedic texts known as the *Brāhmaṇas* mention both Viṣṇu and Śrī, but do not connect the two. It may therefore be suggested that Śrī was originally an independent deity. As Śrī was identified with Kamalā, who was a Mahāvidyā, her introduction into the Vaiṣṇava pantheon as the consort of Viṣṇu makes her a link that connects Vaiṣṇavism with the cult of Śakti as affiliated to Śaivism.

Sarasvatī provides another link of union. Even after her affiliation to Vaiṣṇavism, she has been identified with Bhadrakālī, one of the forms of Durgā. Another instance of connection of Vaiṣṇavism with an important female divinity is furnished by the legends of the Earth goddess. Mahīdevī, the Earth goddess, figures prominently as a consort of Viṣṇu. Śrī, Sarasvatī and Bhūdevī do not exhaust the list of female deities associated with the cult of Viṣṇu. Most of the incarnations and other manifestations of Viṣṇu were also provided with consorts. Fifty-one Viṣṇu *mūrtis* with corresponding Śaktis appear in the *Prapañcasāra Tantra* as emanations from the different letters of the alphabet. The *Gautamīya Tantra* makes the modification of these couples an important element in Vaiṣṇava worship. The *Padma Purāṇa* and the *Rūpamaṇḍana* reveal to us twentyfour manifestations of Viṣṇu. The *Nāradapañcarātra* reveals fourteen of them in association with Śaktis. But, in the light of the information contained in the *Prapañcasāra Tantra* and the *Gautamīya Tantra*, it becomes evident that most of the remaining forms of Viṣṇu have Śaktis corresponding to them. In addition to the Viṣṇu Śaktis emanating from the letters of the alphabet, there are goddesses called *kalās* coming from the same source. Though they do not bear any distinct sectarian make about them, they are not without practical utility in Viṣṇuite worship. These *kalās* appear in the *Kulārṇava Tantra* evidently as an element of Śaktist worship. But they appear there as mere names. On the other hand the Vaiṣṇuite *Gautamīya Tantra* invests them with attributes that give them form and even individuality. Influence of female deities is specially manifest in the cult of Kṛṣṇa and Pradyumna (Manmatha).

In popular imagination, erotic tendencies constitute one of the distinctive marks of Śaktism. But these tendencies became manifest in Vaiṣṇavism as well.

Vaiṣṇavism enjoins on the meditation of *kulakuṇḍalinī* and its elevation through the six centres even to Para-Śiva.

Lastly, Vaiṣṇavism recognises the influence of Śaktism in the emphasis that it puts upon the influence of its female deities.

It is thus clear that Śaktism both in its narrower and wider sense has many points of contact with Vaiṣṇavism. Even in mediaeval Bengal where the cults of the female divinities, notably that of Durgā, are thought to have met Kṛṣṇaism on terms of hostility, the foremost devotees of the rival dominations could rise to an eminence transcending all sectarian distinctions.

V

Evolution of Śakti Worship in India[1]

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Before tracing the evolution of Śakti worship in India, it is desirable to discuss the concept of Śakti as developed in India. Śakti was conceived as the mother principle in India and naturally was associated, rather almost identified, with the cult of the Mother-goddess. Both empirical and speculative elements go to make up the Śakti concept. Among ancient men in all societies, particularly in the Neolithic society, the domination of the feminine principle in the process of the creation was most obvious. It is held by eminent scholars like Gordon Childe that most of the advances in the Neolithic civilization such as food production, pottery-making and domestication and milking of milch animal were started by women. It was, therefore, natural that the mother, the most important aspect of womanhood, was to be regarded as comparable to the Mother Earth in view of possessing similar power of fertility. Besides this obvious empirical consideration, the speculative aspects also came to play, and the power of creation, preservation and destruction by gods was represented or conceived as the feminine principle Śakti. It is this Śakti which makes God active and effective. This power in Indian and also in other societies was conceived as female. In almost all Indian religious sects, the Śakti concept plays an important part. In the Sāṅkhya philosophy, the Prakṛti (feminine principle) with Puruṣa plays an important role.

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[1] The revised copy of the paper was received on the 1st July, 1965.—Ed.

In the Tantric religion both Hindu and Buddhist, Śakti plays a significant part and Śakti is conceived as the all-creating, all-preserving and all-destroying power, and the male god is given a subsidiary position. The history of evolution of the Śakti cult goes to pre-Vedic times. It may be noted that, according to some, the Mother-goddess cult was prevalent even in the Old Stone Age and some stone female figurines discovered in European Palaeolithic and Neolithic Ages are regarded as representatives of ancient Venus ; but this view is not universally accepted. As has been said earlier, in the Neolithic culture, the predominance of the female principles was responsible for the popularity of worship of the Mother-goddess with husband and child. The earliest Trio has been discovered in the Neolithic Jericho. The worship of the Mother-goddess in Syria, Asia Minor, Palestine, Cyprus, Crete and Egypt may be particularly noted. It is very difficult to say as to where this worship of the Mother-goddess originated; but one may agree with Marshall that, between the Indus and the Nile, the cult of the Mother-goddess held its influence.

The earliest archaeological remains in India do not yield any evidence of Śakti worship in Old and New Stone Ages. The Indus Valley civilizations give us the earliest positive evidence of the worship of the Mother-goddess. The numbers and types of terracotta female figurines and representations on seals are so many and varied that one gets puzzled in deriving any systematic information about the nature and worship of the Mother-goddess. The fact that the inscribed seals have not been as yet satisfactorily deciphered makes such a study still more difficult ; but there is some reason to interpret some of the seals as the representation of the Earth goddess, the fertility principle or vegetation aspect of the goddess. But the destructive aspect of the Mother-goddess, the great powerful Sakti, is represented in some of the terrific forms of the goddess found in the terracotta figurines. It is quite clear that, in later time, the Śakti cult was intimately associated with the cult of Śiva. According to some, the ring stones, the cylindrical stone pieces, the phallus stone fixed in a Yoni, are symbolic proofs of the existence of the proto-type of Śiva-Śakti cult in the Valley. Some of the figurines discovered in the Indus Valley sites may be noted to illustrate the prevalence of Śakti worship and its association with the principles of creation, preservation and destruction—the mother and the child figure, pregnant woman figure,[1] woman figure without legs,[2] sealings depicting a nude female figure up side down, legs apart and a plant issuing from her womb, and on the other side figures of men and women with a man holding a knife in the attitude of supplication[3] and a horned female standing between the two branches of a tree.[4] Thus there is no doubt that the worship of the Mother-goddess was the very popular and dominant cult in the early Indus Valley.

When we come to the Ṛgvedic period, we notice more importance attached to male gods and the goddesses are conceived either as wives, daughters or the beloved of male gods. Among the goddesses known from the *Ṛgveda*, mention may be made of Uṣā, Ilā, Sarasvatī, Aditi, Pṛthvī, Rākā, etc. The maximum number of hymns are referred to Uṣā ; but it is difficult to say if Uṣā was at all a powerful goddess as she was dropped from the list of divinities later. However, one may here note that Uṣā in the *Ṛgveda* is conceived as the divine matron and is considered the life and death of everything. She regulates the life of men, animals and birds. She is spoken of as being awakened by the worshippers. She is the preserver of men and the world. She is conceived as guiding men and inspiring tribes.[1] So the Ṛgvedic Uṣā had all the ingredients of becoming an all-creative, all-preserving and evil-destroying power.[2] Uṣā was entirely a natural phenomenon and no clear definite anthropomorphic features would be fixed for her. Therefore, in later days Uṣā passed into oblivion and, even when anthropomorphised as a female associate of the Sun-god, could not attain the status of a prime Mother-goddess. It is not at all possible to believe that Uṣā was metamorphosed into Lakṣmī or Durgā or Umā in the later period. The other female goddess Sarsavatī was a river-goddess and later she is attached to Brahman and becomes a goddess presiding over knowledge. But she also has not the potentiality of becoming the great or powerful Śakti. There is only one goddess, Pṛthvī or the Earth goddess who in the *Atharvaveda* is given the highest esteem and is credited with great powers of creation and sustenance and ultimate destruction. A large hymn is attributed to her in the *Atharvaveda*.[3] However, anthropomorphic form of this terrestrial earth could not be very well determined in the early period. Some traces of the conception of Śakti can be found in the hymn addressed to Vāk[4] in the

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[1] *Ibid.*, Pl. XXV, 20 ; Pl. XCV, 24, 29, 30.

[2] *M.A.S.I.*, No. 42, pp. 124, 162, Pl. XXII ; *Chanhudaro Excavations*, p. 15.

[3] *Excavations at Harappa*, p. 42, Pl. XCIII, 304.

[4] Marshall, *op.cit.*, Pl. XCV, 20.

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[1] Griffith, *Ṛgveda*, I. 48. 5-19.

[2] *Ibid.*, 8.

[3] *AV*, XII. i.

[4] Griffith, *RV*, X. 125. 1-2 (I hold aloft both Varuṇa and Mitra, Indra and Agni, and the pair of Aśvins. I cherish and sustain high-dwelling Soma, and Tvaṣṭṛ. I support Pūṣan and Bhaga); 6 (I bind the bow for Rudra that his arrow may strike and slay the hater of

Devīsūkta and Rātri hymn.[1] The concept of divine energy inherent in every thing, in gods, men and animals, is to be noted. The Rātri hymn also occupies a very prominent position in the Śākta ritual of subsequent times. However, it is Goddess Aditi in the *Ṛgveda* who comes nearest to the all-powerful great Mother-goddess. She has been conceived like all-mother, the Star, the Air. She is called a mother, father and son. She is whatever has been born and shall be born.[2] Here we find definitely the feminine principle playing the supreme role and she is Universal Mother. However, it has to be noted that this great Mother-goddess Aditi almost goes into oblivion in the later period ; even in the Vedas she has not been sparately assigned any prayer. The Ṛgvedic consorts of gods have been considered as the conception of the famale principle absorbing various functions of God representing the productive energies or the generating fertility corresponding to male nature power generally termed as *Puruṣa.*[3] Johnson also takes the word to mean generative and vegetative power.[4] Indrāṇī has been co-related with the conception of Śakti. In the hymns of the *Ṛgveda,* we do not find mention of Śakti as a definite creative principle ; but immense forces of nature acting in such striking phenomena as floating clouds, lightning and rains already influenced the minds of the *Ṛṣis* who were peculiarly open to such impression of grandeur from without. It is true that the word *Śakti* does occur about a dozen times in the *Ṛgveda*

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devotion) ; 7 (I have penetrated Earth and Heaven) ; 8 (I hold together all existence).

[1] *RV*, X. 127.

[2] *Ibid.*, I. 10.

[3] *Ibid.*, III (Griffith, I, p. 316, notes) ; Das, *Śakti or Divine Power*, p.12.

[4] Das, *loc.cit.*

mostly in connection with Indra. According to Das, in the *Ṛgveda*, Śacī is mentioned more often than Śakti. At one place, Śacī, consort of Indra, is mentioned as Devī the Goddess of Might, who waits upon him as the Sun attains the dawn.[1] The Ṛgvedic hymn is significant because it marks the further development in the process unifying the different Śacīs of Indra into one Śacī and actually making her a divine consort. Later, Śacī is conceived as nothing but Indra's deeds of power deified as the wife of Indra.

In the later Vedic period, we find anxiety on the part of the *Ṛiṣis* to find out a consort for their gods. This may be considered as the concrete attempt towards the achievement of the idea of Śakti, the feminine energy, as the spouse of a god. Ambikā, who is conceived as a sister of Rudra, becomes the wife of Śiva who is also a Rudra. Slowly and slowly Śiva gained prominence and his spouse Umā became a powerful goddess.[2] We find the emergence of Durgā in the Brahmanic period when Durgā is connected with sacrificial fire.[3] Like Umā who is also a daughter of Agni, Durgā is connected with Agni.[4] In the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (3.2.4) the seven tongues of Agni are said to be Kālī, Karālī and others. In the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, the names of Durgā, Vairocanī, Kātyāyanī and Kanyā Kumārī appear in the verses addressed to Agni.[5] Thus it is obvious that, during the later Vedic period, there was a definite attempt of assimilating some pre-Aryan Mother-goddess forms. Of course, the various Mother-goddesses were brought under one Father-god who in due course emerges as the

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[1] *RV*, I. 56. 4 ; Das, *op.cit*, pp. 11-15.

[2] Hume, *Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, p. 238.

[3] Muir, *Original Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. IV, p. 427.

[4] *Tait. Ar.*, X. 1. 7.

[5] X. 1. 7. ; Muir, *op.cit.*, p. 345.

Supreme Being. It may be here of some interest to state that the actual forms of Śakti and Śakti worship which became popular in the historical period do not appear to have been derived from early Vedic ideas, though the trace of the conception of Śakti may be found in the early Vedic literature. Neither Uṣā nor Sarasvatī nor Aditi nor Vāk of the Ṛgvedic period served as proto-types of the forms of the Mother-goddess as met with in the historic period, and there is no doubt that, in the later Vedic period and still later, a definite attempt was made to assimilate the Mother-goddess cult of the Nonaryans and give it a definite shape though of course the fiction of the omnipotent one Supreme Father-god was retained. The various iconographic forms of the Mother-goddess, the references to their legs of wood or their dwelling in the caves, all would point out to the indebtedness of the Hindu cult of Śakti to the beliefs and practices of the Nonaryans[1] or rather the Non-Vedic or Non-Brahmanic peoples living in the forests and hilly regions of the country after having yielded the plains to the Aryans.

We do not have any positive proof of any cult image belonging to the early and later Vedic periods. Many Bronze Age and Chalcolithic sites have yielded terracotta figurines which may represent some form of the Mother-goddess ; but nothing definite can be said about the archaeological evidence of the images of the Mother-goddess till the Mauryan period. The gold leaf depicting the Earth goddess, the stone disc discovered from Taxila belonging to the Maurya-Śuṅga period, the Mauryan terracotta figurines, the Yakṣiṇī, all may suggest the existence of

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[1] "There is no example of the ancient Aryans, whether in India or elsewhere, having elevated a female deity to the supreme position occupied by the Mother-goddess" (Farnell, *Greece and Babylon*, pp. 95-96).

Mother-goddess worship certainly among the common people. In the Jātakas and Sūtras, we find references to the Devī. It is only in the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa* and certainly in the Purāṇas that we find the conception of Śakti fully discussed. The Epic and Puranic literature only tried to incorporate this cult of the common people into a particular Hindu sect, and many legends were imagined to explain this entry of the Mother-goddess cult into the accepted sects. The number and variety of the Mother-goddess is bewildering and this suggests the varied forms in which different tribes and folks worship their Mother-goddess. In some of the Purāṇas, all these forms are taken as emanating from one Goddess. The Buddhists and Jains also accept some of these Mother-goddesses. Chattopadhyay[1] rightly thinks that gradually Brahmanic thinkers came to conceive one great Mother-goddess and the different Mother cults of India came to be regarded as parts of or identical with that great one. As for historical evidence for actual representation of the Mother-goddess as Śakti, we have to mention Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī represented in anthropomorphic form as early as the second century B.C. Gaja-Lakṣmī is represented on Pañcāla coins and also in early Buddhist art. Sarasvatī is represented as early as the same age.[2] On a Bharhut pillar, the female standing figure playing a harp and belonging to the Śuṅga period may represent Sarasvatī.[3] Female figures have been carved in curiously shaped discs discovered at Taxila, Banaras and Patna, which certainly throw valuable light on the prevalence of the Mother-goddess cult. These discs are decorated with creepers and lizard.[1] This corroborates the prevalence of Śakti cult during this period. According to Banerjea, these circular discs with female figure with circles may be regarded as the forerunner of *yantras* of the later Tantric cult.[2] A scene belonging to the 2nd century B.C. found at Taxila according to Chattopadhyay is the earliest archaeological evidence of a god and his Śakti together.[3] This motive can also be traced on the coins of Huviṣka representing male and female figures together.[4]

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[1] *Evolution of Hindu Theistic Sects*, p. 53.

[2] Allan, *Catalogue of Coins of Ancient India*, p. cxvii, xix; *JIH*, Vol. XLI, Pt. III, p. 689.

[3] *History and Culture of the Indian People*, Vol. IV, p. 314.

One of the goddesses noted in the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* is Kanyā Kumārī whose existence in the pre-Christian period is accepted. She signifies a South Indian goddess. We have the following account in the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* :[5] "Beyond this (Balita = Madera Barkkallan, 8°42′N, 76°43′E) there is another place Comari at which are the cave of Comari and a harbour. Hither come those men who wish to consecrate themselves for the rest of their lives, bath and dwell in celibacy and women also do the same, for it is told a Goddess dwelt here and bathed." Megasthenes also in his *Indica* refers to the Goddess Pandaea dwelling in the Pāṇḍya country, who was a daughter of Heracles.

The Ardhanārīśvara conception of Lord Śiva was a step forward towards the achievement of Śakti ideas. It is not without but within the Śakti that the God lives. The cult of the Mother-goddess was now gaining more importance. There is a miniature relief belonging to the Kuṣāna period and discovered from Mathura, wherein a fusion of the male and female spirits is noticed.[1] The symbolism of Ardhanārīśvara may be taken to explain the two main divisions of the Śakti cult, Dakṣiṇa-mārga and Vāma-mārga. It is by now established that the gods are ineffective without their Śaktis. In the Purāṇas and Āgamas, the concept of Śakti is perfected. A number of archaeological relics suggest the existence of the Śakti cult. The Tantras further glorified the said cult. In a Gupta inscription,[2] we get mention of divine mothers who were more than one in number and were accompanied by female ghouls or Ḍākinīs and her worship was accompanied with some magic rites. Banerjea rightly sees in this the prevalence of some sort of Tantric practices. So far as the Saptamātṛkā are concerned they are seven in number and there are many archaeological examples. Ideas of the Saptamātṛkā might have evolved from the seven tongues of Agni referred to in the *Ṛgveda* ; but their names and representations differ.

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[1] Chattopadhyay, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

[2] *Development of Hindu Iconography*, p. 171.

[3] Chattopadhyay, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 101.

[5] Schoff, *Periplus*, p. 46.

The culmination of the Śakti conception is found in the Devīmāhātya section of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa.* Śrī, Durgā, Caṇḍī, Annapurṇā, Jagaddhātrī, etc., are some of her many names. These names may represent different local goddesses fused into one Supreme Mother-goddess. They are explained also as representing different attributes of the great Mother-goddess. It may be thus seen that for the study of the origin of Śakti worship in India one has to take into account the religious beliefs of the early Indus Valley people. The early Vedic people gave more importance to the male god, though the role of the female principle was not entirely ignored. However, the historical development of the Śakti cult appears to draw much from Non-Vedic and Pre-Vedic sources of religious traditions ; but the ingenuity and speculative genius of the Brāhmaṇas succeeded in grafting the religious beliefs of the Non-Brahmanic or Non-Vedic people on the stem of Vedic religion or philosophy. The study of the evolution of Śakti worship in India gives another proof of the assimilative character of the ancient Indian religion.

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[1] *JISOA,* 1927, p. 124, Pl. XLIV, 2.

[2] *CII.* III, p. 47.

VI

A Nonaryan Aspect of the Devī

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Whatever may be the circumstances behind the origin of Śakti worship in India, it has generally been admitted that, in certain stages of its development, the Nonaryan ethnic elements of India have left a strong imprint on it. Scholars are of the opinion that the Devī is a composite conception of the adorable female principle, in which different ethnic and regional ideas and beliefs have combined in a manner in order to make it acceptable to both the Nonaryan and the Aryan population of the country. It is mainly on the basis of the two Durgā-stotras of the *Mahābhārata* (IV. 6 and VI. 22), and the Āryā-stava in its supplement (i.e. *Harivaṁśa*, III. 3) that J. N. Banerjea has outlined 'the various constituent elements underlying the principal cult picture of the developed Śakti cult,' and mentioned in this context 'the various Nonaryan strands in her character.'[1] The role of the Nonaryan elements in the development of the conception of the Devī has also been stressed by R. C. Hazra in his study of the Śākta Upapurāṇas.[2]

A close scrutiny of the descriptions of the Devī in the two Durgā-stotras would reveal that a significant emphasis has been laid therein on the terrific and fighting aspects of the Devī. In expressions like Kālī, Karālī, Mahākālī,

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[1] Banerjea, *Development of Hindu Iconography*, 2nd ed., p. 491.

[2] Hazra, *Studies in the Upapurāṇas*, Vol. II, pp. 16-22.

Kapālī, Kapilā, Kṛṣṇapiṅgalā, Aṣṭaśūlapraharaṇā, Khaḍgakheṭakadhāriṇī, Vijayā, Jayā, Mahiṣasṛkpriyā, Aṭṭahāsā, Kākamukhī, Raṇapriyā, etc., her destructive as well as victorious role has amply been manifested. It is further noteworthy that in the Durgā-stotra of the Bhīṣmaparvan she has been described as a dweller in great forests, frightful places and unapproachable countries, while in the second *stotra*, found in the Virāṭa-parvan, she has clearly been mentioned as inhabiting perpetually the Vindhya mountain. This association of the Mahādevī with the Vindhya mountain has further been emphasised in the *Harivaṁśa* (II. 22. 52-56). She is described here as a maiden who killed two mountain-roaming demons called Śumbha and Niśumbha in the Vindhya mountain, as anointed by the ghosts and worshipped by bands of robbers, and as decorated with jars full of wine and meat. Her dwelling in dense forests and association with beasts have also been stressed in the text. But a graphic picture of the deity associated with the Nonaryan tribes can, however, be best found in the oft-quoted verses of the Āryā-stava (*Harivaṁśa*, II. 3. 6-8) : "O Mahādevī, your dwelling is on the frightful mountain-peaks, in caves, rivers, forests and also in the wind. Crowded by cocks, goats, sheep, lions and tigers, and accompanied by the dingling of bell, you are well worshipped by the Śavaras, Barbaras and Pulindas. O you, having peacock-tail as a mark, so renowned as Vindhyavāsinī, walk among all people in all places." These verses are significant not only for the reference to the well-known Nonaryan tribes as worshippers of the goddess Mahādevī, but also for the fact that the goddess Vindhyavāsinī had her access to and popularity in all places. The identity of the present goddess with the one referred to in the Durgā-stotras is proved by her common association with forests, mountains and beasts, and by similar epithets applied to her (e.g. *Śikhipicchadhvajadharā* in the Durgā-stotras and *Mayūrapicchadvajinī* in the Āryā-stava), and also from the reference to wine and meat as favoured by the Devī in both the texts. Again, in the Purāṇas, we find that this Nonaryan goddess has been accepted among the Śākta pantheons of the Puranic worshippers. Kālī in the Kalanjar mountain, Caṇḍikā in Makarandaka and Vindhyavāsinī in the Vindhya mountain are mentioned as the different manifestations of the Devī (*Matsya Purāṇa*, 13. 32, 39, 43); and her particular predilection for wine and meat has also been referred to (*Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, V. 2. 84).

The association of the terrific aspect of the Devī with the Nonaryans can be corroborated by the evidence found in the secular literature. It is interesting to note that Bāṇa-bhaṭṭa in the *Kādambarī* (Pūrva-bhāga, Kathāmukha) has mentioned in the context of reviewing the character of the wild Śavaras that they considered human sacrifices to their goddess as a meritorious act (*puruṣapiśitopahāradharmabuddhi*), and that they appeased their deity by offering animals (*paśurudhireṇa devatārcanaṁ*). In the *Harṣacarita*, too, Bāṇa refers to the destructive character of the Devī and to the animal sacrifice to her (Ch. VIII). But the most revealing information can be found in the *Gauḍavaha*, a Prakrit *kāvya* composed by Vākpati in the first half of the 8th century A.D. In the course of his campaign, king Yaśovarman, the hero of the historical poem, reached the valley of the river Śoṇa and thence proceeded to the Vindhya mountain. Here the king offers a hymn of fifty-two couplets to the celebrated Nonaryan deity Vindhyavasinī Devī, or 'the Goddess residing in the Vindhyas' (*Gauḍavaha*, 285-338). A vivid picture of the aweful atmosphere of the temple of Vindhyavāsinī and its surroundings has been painted in the hymn, and her destructive roles including the slaying of the buffalo-demon, association with the peacocks, and her blood-thirsty character, all are found to have been well emphasised in the verses. The most significant among these is, however, the reference to the daily human sacrifice before the goddess of the Śavaras who lived in a cave of the Vindhya.

Further light on the worship of the goddess by the Śavaras has been thrown by the *Kathāsaritsāgara* of Somadeva (11th century A.D.). According to the story entitled 'Jīmūtavāhana's adventure in the former birth' (Vol. II, Ch. XXII), once Jīmūtavāhana was captured by the robbers who led him in chains to a temple of Durgā in a Śavara village to sacrifice him as a victim before the goddess, but was fortunately saved by the merciful Śavara chief Pulindaka who ultimately became his life-long friend.[1] Similar reference to human sacrifice to the goddess, also called Caṇḍikā, is found in another story, viz., the 'Story of Śrīdatta and Mṛgāṅkavatī' (Vol. I, Ch. X).[2] From the perusal of the *Kathāsaritsāgara*, it appears that the wild hill tribes of the Vindhya range were indiscriminately called Śavara, Pulinda, Bhil, etc.[3], and that their supreme deity was the Devī in her terrific form, who has been mentioned under different names, e.g., Vindhyavāsinī, Kālī, Durgā and Caṇḍikā in different places.

With the help of the characterisations found in the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, Banerjea has shown that the great Goddess 'assumes various forms of pacific and terrific character (*saumyāni yāni rūpāṇi...yāni cātyantaghorāṇi*).' It may be presumed from the data furnished above that some of the forms representing the terrific aspects of the goddess evolved out of the Nonaryan conception of the Devī. As regards the Nonaryan deity, discussed above, it seems that only after definite modifications she became acceptable to all sections of the Indian population.

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[1] Tawney, *The Ocean of Story*, London, 1924.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Ibid.*

VII

Origin of the Śakti Cult

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The problem of the origin of Śakti worship is an extremely fascinating one. It is closely associated with two allied problems. One of them is the belief in the Supernatural beings and the other is the belief in the sex of the Supernatural beings. The second problem leads to further investigation about the sex of the Supreme power, the God or the Goddess. These are more or less eternal questions that are answered by all religions in different ways. Whatever be the answer in the religious thinking, the belief in the Supernatural being is seen in all the religions. Except a few religions like Islam, most of the other religions seek to explain the Supernatural being as a God or a Goddess. Therefore, it is clear that both the beliefs about the existence of Supernatural beings and their sex are a universal phenomenon. However, the difference about considering a God or a Goddess as the Supreme being is existing.

The Indian thinkers tried to synthesise religious dogmas. The worship of *grāmadevatās* and *gotradevatās* is given a place of pride in most of our social and religious practices by the followers of all deities. When the question of Iṣṭadevatā is tackled, the differences of the Śaivas, Vaiṣṇavas and Śāktas originate.

The worship of Śakti as the Iṣṭadevatā is the full-fledged development of Śāktism. The origin of this worship requires to be tackled from two different view-points. One of them is that of a devotee and the other that of the historian.

From the point of view of a devotee, the Śakti, whatever be the name—Kālī, Durgā, Ambā, Bahucarā—is the omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient deity, who invariably protects the devotee and the world, as either a benign or a terrific deity. She is the Creator, the maintaining force and the destroyer of the world. She herself creates the world alone or accompanied by her male partner. She is thus the highest form either of Saguṇa Brahman or the highest Prakṛti. She is the beginningless and endless deity, and hence no problem about the origin of Śakti or her worship ever arises from the purely religious point of view.

But as a historian of religion and religious practices, when one tries to observe Śakti-worship, he finds himself faced with a different situation. Here one comes across a medley of religious practices, ranging from simple muttering of prayer and bowing down to the great Mother, to the orgy of sacrifices and other abhorent rites. The analysis of these practices and the story of the development of these rites, the origin and development of the images of the deity are some of the spheres to which the historian addresses his query.

As to the development of the images, attention is focussed on the ancient remains in our country and in other parts of the world. The images of women showing pregnancy, nudity, fondling of children and other feminine aspects are of universal occurrence. The evidences coming from the dim past of the prehistoric age, such as the so-called Venus of Willendorf, Menten, Lespungue, Lausell from Europe have been traced to the Aurignacian period of the Stone Age. These are probably the earliest representations in sculpture of the human ideas that were current in the society of hunters and food-gatherers. The images certainly indicate that the divinity was considered to be the form of a mother, creating and nourishing the world. The whole ancient world is conversant with this idea of a protecting feminine deity. In India also the earliest evidences from

Chalcolithic cultures indicate the presence of the Mother-goddesses and they continue down to this day throughout the different phases of history.

The creative forces of the great Mother-goddess are also represented in a variety of ways in which pregnancy, nudity, the posture of carrying children, vegetation coming out of the womb, etc., are depicted. Some of these with a changed view-point are criticised as indecent ; but in all probability their symbolism had nothing indecent about them.

The numerous deities from different countries and climes that are turned out by the spade thus bear mute testimony often to the variety of religious ideas about the deities. Some of the religious practices can be indirectly inferred from the altars, etc., that are obtained in excavations. The whole evidence of archaeology clearly indicates that the worship of the great Mother was universal and belongs to a hoary past, from which some evidences are forthcoming.

These common ideas of humanity comes sometimes in sharper focus and at other times they are relegated to the background. The rise and fall of these ideas depend on many cultural factors. In our country the feminine deity as the fertility goddess or the goddess of prosperity is probably known from the Indus Culture, from the deposits of which feminine figurines, of a variety of forms, as well as females depicted on the seals have been noted. What they represent is still at its best a guess work as there is no clue to the writing. Looking to the general phenomena in other parts of the contemporary world, they would be regarded as Mother-goddesses who were popular objects of worship. But in the god-ridden atmosphere of the Vedic period, Aditi, Sarasvatī and other goddesses do occur as occupying a rather inferior status. The relics of the Maurya and succeeding periods indicate the goddesses in worship. The goddesses such as Durgā, Mahiṣamardinī, the Saptamatṛkā, Navadurgā, etc., come into prominence in the first millenium of the Christian era.

The *Durgā-stotras* and numerous Tantras explain to us the strength of worship of the Mother-goddess. These Tantras record the ideology of the worship of the benign as well as the terrific aspect. Usually the discourse takes place in the divine sphere and the ideas are transferred to the mundane world ; hence to classify this literature on the time and space level is a stupendous job. But the current ideas of Śakti worship were collected, developed and studied in this literature. In the medieval period these ideas seem to have gained ground and they continue to this day amongst the Śāktas.

To summarise the whole evidence it may be inferred that—

(1) The origin of worship of the Mother-goddess is to be traced to the Stone Age and Early Neolithic group.

(2) The ideas of the benign and malignant aspects of the goddess are equally widespread in time and space.

(3) The history of the various Śakti-pīṭhas require fresh study.

(4) For the study of the various Śakti-pīṭhas in India, an effort should be made, purely on archaeological field-work, to establish independent chronology for the rise and development of each Pīṭha.

(4a) This study should consider the relevant literature to understand the details of the growth of the ritual and popularity of the Pīṭha in question.

(5) Such a study of the Śakti-pīṭhas in India will help in the better understanding of the spread of the Śāktamata.

VIII

Śāktism and Mother-Right

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The Śāktas conceive the Mother-goddess as the personification of the primordial energy and the source of all divine as well as cosmic evolution. She is identified with the Supreme Being conceived as the source and spring as well as the controller of all the forces and potentialities of nature. Such a conception of the Mother-goddess can only be the outcome of a female-dominated society. The social system which traces descent and transmits property through the mother alone may be called mother-kin. The Khasis of Assam have mother-kin, and among them goddesses predominate over gods and priestesses over priests.[1] The state of the society and religion of the Khasis presents some interesting parallels to the social and religious condition of Western Asia and Egypt in early days.[2] "In later times father-kin had certainly displaced mother-kin among the Semitic worshippers of Astarte, and probably the same change had taken place among the Phrygian worshippers of Cybele. Yet the older custom lingered in Lycia down to the historical period ; and we may conjecture that in former times it was widely spread through Asia Minor."[3] In the old Arabian religion, gods and goddesses occurred in pairs, the goddess being the greater ; but when father-right elements gradually encroached upon the field of religion, the progress of things was towards changing goddesses into gods.[4] In Egypt, the archaic system of mother-kin lasted down to Roman times.[5] Marshall suggests that, like the Mother-goddess of Western Asia, the pre-Aryan cult of the Indian Mother-goddess originated in a matriarchal state of society.[6] Marshall's interpretations have largely been inspired by the observations of R. P. Chanda who held that Śāktism arose in India under the same social conditions as those under which Astarte or Ashtart was conceived in Syria, Cybele in Asia Minor and Isis in Egypt, that is, in a society where mother-right or mother-kin was prevalent.[7]

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[1] C. J. Lyall's introduction to P. R. T. Gurdon's *The Khasis*, London, 1907, pp. xxiii ff.

[2] Cf. *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. II, p. 115.

[3] J. G. Frazer, *Adonis Attis Osiris*, London, 1907, pp. 394-95.

Chanda's hypothesis is based upon the following considerations. The survival of the custom of marrying the daughter of the maternal uncle in some parts of South India reflects a matriarchal social organisation. This custom has also been referred to in the *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra*[8] and in the *Tantravārtika* of Kumārila.[9] In the *Mahābhārata*, it is stated that among the Ārattas and Vāhīkas, the nephews inherit the property instead of the sons.[10] According to the evidence furnished by the *Ambaṭṭha Sutta*[11] and the *Mahāvastu*,[12] the Śākyas used to marry their sisters. In the

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[4] W. Robertson Smith, *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia*, Cambridge, 1885, p. 306.

[5] Frazer, *op. cit.*, p. 398.

[6] J. Marshall, *Mohenjodaro and the Indus Civilization*, Vol. I, London, 1931, p. 51.

[7] R. P. Chanda ; *Indo-Aryan Races*, Rajshahi, 1916, pp. 150 ff.

[8] *Baudh. D. S.*, I. I. 19-26 ; cf. *Manu*, XI. 172-73.

[9] See P. V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, Vol. II, Part I, Poona, 1941, pp. 459-60.

[10] Karṇa, XLV. 13.

[11] *Dīgha Nikāya*, III. 16 ; also see S. Beal, *A Catena of Buddhist Scriptures*, London, 1871, p. 126.

[12] J. J. Jones, *The Mahāvastu*, London, 1949, Vol. I, p. 296.

Dasaratha Jātaka, Sītā is represented as the sister as well as the wife of Rāma.[13] According to the Ceylonese *Mahāvaṃsa*, Sīhabāhu, king of Vaṅga and Rāḍhā, married his sister Sīhasīvalī.[14] The Buddhist stories of sister marriage indicate the existence of Mother-kin in Eastern India. Chanda's hypothesis is further supported by the researches of Ehrenfels who has prepared a long list of the matriarchal tribes and castes of India.[15] More than one hundred of such tribes and castes are to be found in India, the chief matriarchal zones being, according to the map of Ehrenfels, Assam, parts of Baluchistan, parts of Andhra Pradesh and Madras, Mysore and Kerala.

It is but natural that, in the religion of these matriarchal social groups, special importance is attached to the cult of the Mother-goddess, and, in many of the cases, the Mother-goddess is conceived as their tribal ancestress. Reference may be made in this connexion to the Khasis of Assam.[16] The religion of the Garos also shows markedly matriarchal traces.[17] The matriarchal Pulayans or Cherumans worship Bhagavatī as a sort of caste goddess or ancestress.[18] The Kadirs of Kerala are also a matriarchal people, and they worship the goddess Kālī.[19] Bhūmi Devī is the Earth-goddess of the matriarchal Nayars, to whom the Great *Ucharal* feast is dedicated.[20] The Parayans or Malas of the

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[13] I. C. Ghosh, *Jātakamañjarī* (Beng.), C. U., 1934, pp. 178-83.

[14] W. Geiger, *Mahāvaṃsa or the Great Chronicle of Ceylon*, Colombo, 1950, p. 53.

[15] O. R. Ehrenfels, *Mother-Right in India*, Hyderabad, 1941, pp. 18-35.

[16] Gurdon, *op. cit.*, pp. xxiii ff. ; 82 ff.

[17] A. Playfair, *The Garos*, London, 1909, pp. 80 ff.

[18] L. K. Ananthakrishna Iyer, *The Cochin Tribes and Castes*, Vol. I, Madras, 1909, p. 112.

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 11.

[20] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 48.

Far South are also a matriarchal people worshipping their tribal mother Athal,[21] along with three categories of Divine Mothers.[22] The Gowri tribes of Madhya Pradesh believe in several mythological ancestors who were all husbands of one and the same ancestress.[23] In the same region matriarchal castes like Bhunjias, Dumals, Gonds, Kamars, Kawars, Khangars, etc., are also ancestress-worshippers.[24] Among the Dravidian(Brahui)-speaking Muslims of Baluchistan, it is believed that the mother of Muḥammad was the Prophet of God.[25]

The *Mahābhārata* refers to the Madra country which seems to be a land governed by matriarchal laws. In the marriage of Pāṇḍu with a Madra princess, the dowry was taken by the kinsmen of the bride.[26] The inhabitants of the said country are described as outcastes and to mix with them is regarded unlawful.[27] The Madrakas used to assemble in free sexual union. It reminds us of the agricultural rites. Frazer[28] and Briffault[29] have collected numerous references from the rites and customs of the contemporary world in order to show that sexual intercourse was believed to promote the fertility of the earth. Such agricultural rites originated and developed exclusively in the hands of women since agriculture was originally the province of women.[30] Westermarck rightly points out that matrilocal marriage seems particularly to occur among agricultural peoples. The pastoral tribes are mostly patrilineal because cattle-rearing is largely a masculine pursuit.[31] Briffault also says that definite economic power was first placed in the hands of men by the domestication of animals and that power was used to buy off the claims of women in the matters of life. But where agriculture had developed on an important scale without any intervening pastoral stage, the matriarchal order had often persisted and had even become accentuated in relatively advanced phases of culture.[32]

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[21] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 80-81.

[22] E. Thurston and K. Rangachari, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, Madras, 1909, Vol. VI, pp. 104-05, 123.

[23] R. V. Russell and Hira Lal, *Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces*, London, 1916, Vol. III, p. 161.

[24] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 324, 428, 534 ; Vol. III, pp. 89, 328, 391, 440.

[25] R. Hughes-Buller, *Census of India : Baluchistan*, 1901, Vol. V, Part I, Report, Bombay, 1902, p. 45.

[26] Ādi, CXIII.

[27] Karṇa, XL. 24-25, 27, 34, 41.

[28] *The Golden Bough* (abridged), London, 1954, pp. 135-36.

[29] *The Mothers*, London, 1952, Vol. III, pp. 196-209.

In the conversation between Pāṇḍu and Kuntī we find that women formerly did not adhere to their husbands faithfully, and yet they were not regarded sinful, for that was the sanctioned usage of the times. It was Śvetaketu, son of Uddālaka, who introduced patrilocal marriage.[33] More light on this subject may be thrown, if the philosophical interpretation of the *Sāṅkhya* be taken into account. The cult of the Mother-goddess is intimately associated with the *Sāṅkhya* concept of *Prakṛti*. The *Sāṅkhya* identifies *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti* respectively with the male and female principles, man and woman. Just as the offspring is produced by the union of man and woman, so also this universe is produced by the union of *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*.[34] But the same *Sāṅkhya* holds that *Puruṣa* is subordinate and nothing but a passive spectator; *Prakṛti* is all in all. Referring to this contradiction Śaṅkara says: *kathañcodāsīnaḥ Puruṣaḥ pradhānaṃ pravartayet?* If the creation is possible by the union of *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*, how is it that the role of *Puruṣa* is so insignificant? Or, if *Puruṣa* is so insignificant and indifferent, how is it that he takes so important a part in the matter of creation? This contradiction cannot be explained unless it is brought in conformity with the matriarchal social system. In a matriarchal society there is always a problem as regards the position of the male person. Here the mother is the head and the only bond of union in the family. The father has no kinship with his children who belong to their mother's clan. The problem regarding the role of husband in a matriarchal society perhaps finds its expression in the *Sāṅkhya* philosophy. In a matriarchate, father has something to do in the matter of procreation, but in the family he is insignificant. Similarly *Puruṣa* has something to do in the matter of creation; but his real role is that of a passive spectator. It is *Prakṛti* that is supreme and her partner is not only subordinate, but also indifferent, inactive and insignificant.

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[30] *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. I, pp. 227-28 ; V. G. Childe, *New Light on the Most Ancient East*, London, 1954, pp. 48 ff. ; Briffault, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 251-52.

[31] *Origin and Development of Moral Ideas*, London, 1912, Vol. I, p. 634.

[32] Briffault, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 251 ff.

[33] Ādi, CXXII.

[34] *Sāṅkhyakārikā*, XXI.

It is interesting to note that, in the Tantras, women are given the right of initiating persons as preceptress in the matter of religious and spiritual activities. This high position of women, especially in the field of religion, is due to their traditional association with agricultural magic or religion, and all this can only be explained in terms of mother-right. Briffault shows that, in many primitive religions, the central ritual is performed not by a priest but by a priestess.[35] The main feature of the Tantras 'is the higher standard to which they have raised womanhood.'

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[35] Briffault, *op. cit.*, Vol, II, pp. 525-41 ff.; Vol. III, pp. 129 ff.

"Śakti proclaims that, in one sense, she is manifested more in women than in men. When women are approached with reverence and awe, purity and devotion, they raise men to the standard of gods."[36] The conception of *Dakṣiṇācāra*, as opposed to *Vāmācāra*, seems to be a later development, and it is possible that the first word in the expression *Vāmācāra* is not *Vāma* or left but *Vāmā* or a woman. R. G. Bhandarkar writes that 'the ambition of every pious follower of the system is to become identical with Tripurasundarī, and one of his religious exercises is to habituate himself to think that he is a woman. Thus the followers of the *Śakti* school justify their appellation by the belief that god is a woman, and it ought to be the aim of all to become a woman.'[37] In the *Devībhāgavata* we find that Brahman, Viṣṇu and Śiva were transformed into women before they were allowed to see the Devī in her highest form.[38] According to the Tantras, the *Parā Śakti* should be worshipped only by becoming a woman—*vāmā bhūtvā yajet Parām.*[39]

It seems, therefore, that the Tantric mode of worship was originally followed by women, and it is only due to this that the modern Tantric aspirant conceives himself to be a woman. The pretended change of sex may explain a wide spread custom whereby men dress and live like women. In the Pelew Islands, a man who is inspired by a goddess wears female attire and is treated as a woman. In Lydia and Cos, the priests used to wear female attire.[40]

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[36] N. Kunjan Pillai, *Census of India : Travancore*, 1931, Vol. XXVIII, Trivandrum, 1932, p. 349.

[37] R. G. Bhandarkar, *Collected Works*, Vol. IV, Poona, 1933, p. 208.

[38] *Devībhāgavata*, III. 4. 6-10.

[39] N. N. Vasu's *Viśvakoṣa*, Vol. VII, p. 512.

[40] Frazer, *Lectures on the Early History of Kingship*, London, 1905, pp. 242 ff.

Effeminate sorcerers or priests of this sort are found among the Sea-Dyaks of Borneo, the Bugis of South Celebes, the Patagonians of South America, the Aleutians and many Indian tribes of North America, the Congolese, the inhabitants of Madagascar and in many other countries of the world.[41] Male members of the Vallabha sect in India often seek to win the favour of the god by wearing their hair long and thinking themselves as women.[42] It is to be marked that we come across these effeminate priests in regions where the system of mother-right either actually prevails or has at least left its traces in tradition and custom.

The Tantras attach special importance to *Kumārīpūjā*, the worship of the virgin[43], which derives its main impulses from mother-right. The same also holds good so far as the Christian concept of the Virgin Mother is concerned. The Tantras show how women, as manifestation of the great cause of all, are entitled to respect and even to veneration.[44] The deification of women in general and virgins in particular comes from a belief which conceives the Supreme Being as a female principle. In the Śākta scheme of cosmic evolution, the unmanifested *Prakṛti* alone existed before creation. She wished to create, and having assumed the form of the Great Mother, she created Brahman, Viṣṇu and Śiva out of her own body.[45] In her highest form she is Mahādevī, the consort of Śiva ; but, in spite of her being the consort of the latter, she is his creator.[46] Hogarth writes : "In Punic Africa, she is Tanit with her son ; in Egypt, Isis with Horus ; in Phonecia, Ashtaroth with Tammuj ; in Asia Minor, Cybele with Attis ; in Greece (and especially in the Greek Crete itself), Rhea with young Zeus. Everywhere she is *unwed*, but made the mother first of her companion by immaculate conception, and that of the gods and all life by the embrace of her own son. In memory of these original facts her cult (especially the most esoteric mysteries of it) is marked by various practices and observances symbolic to the negation of true marriage and obliteration of sex."[47] Such tales of virgin mothers are relics of an age when the father had no significance at all, and of a society in which a man's contribution to the matter of procreation was hardly recognised.

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[41] Frazer, *Adonis Attis Osiris*, pp. 428 ff.

[42] Monier-Williams, *Religious Thought and Life in India*, London, 1883, p. 136.

[43] See *Tantrasāra* (Vasumati ed.), pp. 642 ff.; also *Devībhāgavata*, III. 26-27.

[44] A. Avalon, *Principles of Tantra*, Madras, 1960, *Pref.* Cf. Wilson, *A Sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus*, London, 1862, pp. 240 ff.

[45] *Devībhāgavata*, III. 1-6; cf. *Śāktānandataraṅgiṇī*, I. 3.

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[46] Cf Marshall, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 57.

[47] *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. I, p. 147.

IX

The Evolution of Śakti Cult at Jajpur, Bhubaneswar and Puri[1]

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In a broader Indian context, the worship of the female principle goes back to the days of the Indus Valley Civilisation : but it is difficult to say when this cult made its first appearance in ancient Orissa.

Confining oneself strictly to direct historical evidences, the earliest epigraphic evidence regarding Śakti worship is found in the Kalāhāṇḍi copper plate grant of Tuṣṭikara[2] who flourished about the 5th or 6th century A.D. In that plate we find king Tuṣṭikara as a worshipper of the goddess Stambheśvarī.[3] D. C. Sircar[4] thinks that Stambheśvarī was the family deity of the Sulkīs and that she was represented in the form of a pillar indicating Śiva and Śakti. The same goddess of pillar is also mentioned in the grants of the Bhañjas[5] and Tuṅgas[6] of Orissa who ruled over its different parts from the 8th to the 11th century A.D. There is a pillar of Stambheśvarī at Sonepur and a temple of the goddess at Askā in Ganjam. The practice of worshipping wooden pillars continues in many villages of the hill tribes.

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[1] The revised copy of the paper was received on the 9th June 1965.—Ed.

[2] *JKHRS*, Vol. II, No. 2, pp. 107-10 ; *EI*, Vol. XXX, pp. 274-78.

[3] स्तम्भेश्वरीपादभक्तमातापितृपादानुध्यातः श्रीमहाराजतुष्टिकरः ।

[4] *EI*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 2, pp. 107-14.

[5] *OHRJ*, Vol. II, No. 3, p. 158 : स्तम्भेश्वरीलब्धवरप्रसादराणकश्रीरणभंजदेवः कुशली ।

[6] *JASB*, N.S., Vol. XII, 1916, pp. 291-95.

From the wide prevalence of this cult, it may be surmised that the worship of the Mother-goddess was originally a leading feature of the Nonaryan folk who lived in this part of the country and that it was from this source that it ultimately got its entry into Hinduism. Later on, this reoriented Śakti cult continued to exist without losing its separate identity along with Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism.

The rare catholic character of the religious system that evolved in the eastern coast of India is evident from the five traditional *pīṭhas* or shrines named according to the five distinct cults. Purī, Bhubaneśvara, Koṇārka, Mahā-Vināyaka and Virajā are regarded as the *pīṭhas* of the Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva, Saura, Gāṇapatya and Śākta cults respectively.

JAJPUR—Jajpnr on the river Vaitaraṇī was an old and prominent seat of Śakti cult and Tantric worship and its history goes back to the days of the *Mahābhārata*[7] when it was considered as a sacred place of pilgrimage. The Gayāsura episode of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* calls it Nābhigayā. The *Brahma Purāṇa*[8] and the *Kapilasaṁhitā*[9] also point out its sanctity as a centre of religious activities. Virajā is mentioned as one of the forty two Siddha-pīṭhas in the *Kubjikā Tantra*[10] and as one of the fifty *tīrthas* in the *Jñānārṇava Tantra.*[11] It is also mentioned as a Śākta Pīṭha in the *Bṛhan-Nīla Tantra*, the *Aṣṭādaśa Pīṭha* of Śaṅkarācārya and the *Pīṭhanirṇaya*.[12]

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[7] ततो वैतरणीं गत्वा सर्वपापप्रमोचनीम् ।
विरजां तीर्थमासाद्य विराजति यथा शशी ॥
Mahābhārata, Vanaparvan, XXCV. 6.

[8] *Brahma Purāṇa*, XIII. 1.

[9] *Kapilasaṁhitā*, VII. 2.

[10] *JRASB*, Letters. Vol. XIV, No. 1, 1948 (D. C. Sircar, 'The Śākta Pīṭhas', p. 19).

[11] *Ibid.*

In epigraphy Virajā is mentioned as Virañjā in the Parlakhimedi copper plate of Pṛthvī-mahārāja[13], who flourished towards the close of the 6th century A.D. The Soro copper plate of Bhānudatta[14] (7th century A.D.) refers to Virajā. Unmaṭṭakesarī,[15] who ruled about the middle of the 7th century A.D, had his capital at Virajā. An inscription of the Bhauma-Kara king Śāntikara mentions an inhabitant of Virajas.[16] Under the Bhauma-Karas, Guhadevapāṭaka or Guheśvarapāṭaka became the capital of Utkala and it was the "name applied by the Bhauma-Karas either to Virajā or to a new city built by them in its vicinity."[17] The earlier kings of this dynasty were Buddhists, but the later rulers were eccletic in their faith. Tribhuvanamahādevī[18] of this family compares herself with Kātyāyanī at the time of her accession. An inscribed image of Cāmuṇḍā from Jajpur[19] refers to it as the *kīrtti* of queen Vatsadevī who was probably the wife of one of the early Bhauma-Kara kings. The Bhauma-Karas were followed by the Somavaṁśī kings and during the reign of Yayāti III Mahāśivagupta, their capital was shifted from Yayātinagara in Kosala to Guheśvarapāṭaka which was renamed as Abhinava-Yayātinagara. The Muslim chronicles like the *Tabaqat-i-Nāsirī* and *Tarīkh-i-Fīrūzshāhī* called Yayātinagara as 'Jājnagar' and subsequently the suffix *nagara* was substituted by *pura* and the place became Jajpur.

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[12] *Ibid.*, p. 45.

[13] S. N. Rajaguru, *Inscriptions of Orissa*, Vol. I, Part II, pp. 54-56.

[14] *EI*, Vol. XXIII, pp. 203-04.

[15] *IHQ*, Vol. XII, p. 492.

[16] *EI*, Vol, XIX, pp. 263-264.

[17] *Ibid.*, XXVIII, No. 32, pp. 179-85, *JKHRS*, Vol. II, p. 103; B. Misra, *Orissa under the Bhauma Kings*, p. 87.

[18] *JBORS*, Vol. II, pp. 419-27.

[19] *EI*, Vol. XXVIII, pp. 184-85.

During the medieval period Jajpur was a flourishing centre of the Mother-goddess cult and Virajā was the presiding deity of the place. She is said to have emerged from the fire altar[20] of Brahman when ten horse-sacrifices were performed by that divinity. The image of Virajā is concealed under clothes ; but from the description of the priests it is known that it is a form of Durgā. She is two-armed and rides on a lion to kill the buffalo demon with her *śūla*. R. P. Chanda suggested it to be the 'earliest form of the goddess conceived by her votaries and Virajā represents the earliest phase of the cult of the goddess.'[21] He assigns it to the pre-Gupta period ;[22] but K. C. Panigrahi[23] holds a different view about the dating of the images on the basis of their arms. But the antiquity of Jajpur as a centre of the Śakti cult cannot be doubted as it abounds in the images of Mātṛkās.

The story regarding Durgā and the seven mothers is given in the *Devīmāhātmya* section of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*. The *Varāha Purāṇa*[24] gives a different story about their origin and connects them with the killing of the Asura Andhaka by Śiva. The Bihar stone pillar inscription Skandagupta[25] (line nine) mentions the divine mothers who are regarded as the mothers or nurses of Kārttikeya. The Gangdhar stone inscription of Viśvavarman (line 35) mentions that his minister Mayūrākṣaka built a temple for the dlvine mothers 'who utter loud and tremendous shouts in joy and who stir up the oceans with the mighty wind rising from the magic rites of their religion.'[26] The Kadambas ef the Deccan[27] were worshippers of the Sapta-Mātṛkā and the Cālukya kings are also described as being nourished by the 'seven mothers of mankind.'[28] It can not be determined whether the popularity of the Mātṛikās at Jajpur is due to the patronage of the Bhauma-Karas or the Somavaṁśī kings. While R. P. Chanda assings these Mātṛkās to the 8th century A. D., K. C. Panigrahi thinks that the association of babies with the Mātṛkās is a later iconographic feature initiated by the Somavaṁśīs.[29] At present we get two sets of Mātṛkās at Jajpur. Two colossal figures of Vārāhī and Indrāṇī servive of the first set. The superb Vārāhī image of Jājpur is a marvellous representation of this goddess. There is another group of life-size images of the mothers and five of them are now worshipped in a modern shrine. 'In all these images the child is carved admirably and the faces of each image is lit up by the subdued smile of a mother proud of her child.'[30] In their presentation, the artist has succeeded to convey 'two antagonistic elements, the war-goddess and the caressing mother.' Particularly, the Cāmuṇḍā[31] of Jājpur with emaciated body, sunken eyes, shrunken belly and the garland of skulls is a great piece of art and may be regarded as one of the finest specimens of its kind. We also get fine images of the Mātṛkās from the neighbouring areas of Jajpur. The Mātṛkās from Dharmaśālā, especially the image of Cāmuṇḍā, now in the Orissa State Museum, Bhubaneswar, show the artistic glory as well as the popularity of the Śakti cult in that region. It is significant that the surrounding area of Jajpur was also at one time the seat of the Vajrayāna form of Tantric Buddhism. A large number of deities like different kinds of Tārā, Heruka, Kurkullā and Aparājitā are found near Jajpur from Udayagiri, Ratnagiri and Lalitagiri.[32]

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[20] R. L. Mitra, *Antiquities of Orissa*, Vol. II (Indian Studies, Calcutta), pp. 257-58.

[21] R. P. Chanda, *Memoirs of Archaeological Survey of India*, No. 44, p.5.

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 4.

[23] K. C. Panigrahi, *Archaeological Remains at Bhubaneswar*, p. 73.

[24] *Varāha Purāṇa*, 27. 28-43.

[25] Fleet, *CII*, Vol. III, p. 48.

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[26] *Ibid.*, p. 78.

[27] *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. VI, p. 27.

[28] सप्तलोकमातृभि: सप्तमातृभिरभिवर्द्धितानाम् ।

Indian Antiquary, Vol. VI, p. 76.

[29] K. C. Panigrahi, *op.cit.*, p. 137.

[30] R. P. Chanda. *op.cit.*

[31] J. N. Benerjea, *Development of Hindu Iconography* (2nd ed.), p. 507, Plate XLIV. fig. 5.

The popularity of Jajpur as a focal point of Śakti worship continued in later times and there are references to it in the *Kapilasaṁhitā*[33], in the *Mahābhārata*[34] of Sāralā Dāsa (15th century) and in the *Bata Abakāsha*[35] of Balarāma Dāsa. In this context, the discovery of the *Atharvaveda* from Jajpur is very significant. Lord Gaurāṅga also prayed to Virajā when he passed through Jajpur in the 16th century.[36]

BHUBANESWAR—Known as *Ekāmra-kṣhetra*, it is extolled in several Sanskrit works like the *Ekāmra Purāṇa*, *Svarṇādrimahodaya*, *Ekāmracandrikā*, *Kapilasaṁhitā* and the *Tīrthacintāmaṇi* of Vācaspati Miśra. It is also mentioned as a Śākta Pīṭha in the *Jñānārṇava Tantra*, *Nāmāṣṭottaraśata* and *Bṛhan-Nīla Tantra* which indicate that the worship of the female principle went hand in hand with the worship of the male principle.

The evolution and influence of the Śakti worship at Bhubaneswar can be studied from the sculptures of the various temples. The Paraśurāmeśvara, which is considered as one of the earliest temples of the place, contains a group of Sapta-Mātṛkā carved in relief on the north-west corner of the northern wall of the Jagamohana. Among the Mātṛkās, the sculpture of Vārāhī holding a lotus and fish in the right hands and a vase and *kuṭhāra* in the left is very significant. The fish in one of the hands of Vārāhī is unique and J. N. Banerjea[37] has aptly remarked that, *Matsya* being one of the *Pañea-Makāra*, it was probably a Tantric feature. R. C. Agarwal[38] traces the introduction of fish in the Vārāhī figure to the 8th-9th century A.D. But the presentation of Vārāhī with fish at the Paraśurāmeśvara temple takes back the date at least to the 7th century A.D. Another peculiarity of these Mātṛkās is that they are not associated with any child.

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[32] N. K. Sahu, *Buddhism in Orissa*, pp. 181-99.

[33] तत्र श्रीविरजादेवी भुक्तिमुक्तिप्रदायिनी ।
साधकानां हितार्थाय विरजा उत्कले स्थिता ॥
Kapilasaṁhitā, Dutta Press, Cuttack, p. 29.

[34] *Mahābhārata* (Oriya) by Sāralā Dāsa, Droṇa Parva.

[35] Prachi ed., p. 19.

[36] *Caitanyamaṅgala* by Locana Dāsa, Madhya Khaṇḍa.

The Śakti sculptures are continued on the walls of the Vaitāla temple and it contains a terrific Cāmuṇḍā as its presiding deity. K. C. Panigrahi[39] thinks that it is during this time that Śakti worship made its first appearance at Bhubaneswar as no other temple preceding it has any image of Śakti as the presiding deity. According to him, the name Vaitāla is derived from the word Vetāla or spirits who are invoked by the Tāntrikas and Kāpālikas to attain *siddhi*. Apart from the sculptures of Ardhanārīśvara and Mahiṣāsuramardinī Durgā on the walls of of the main temple, we find a group of Sapta-Mātṛkā in the inner dark walls of the Jagamohana. All these mothers sit in *Yogāsana* pose on full-blown lotus with their different attributes. The boar-headed Vārāhī also occurs here with a fish and *kuṭhāra* in her hands. One significant departure from the Paraśurāmesvara temple is that, here Cāmuṇḍā has a corpse being eaten by a jackal on the pedestal instead of an owl and it has the hood of a snake over the head.

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[37] *Development of Hindu Iconography*, p. 506.

[38] *OHRJ*, Vol. XII, No. 1. pp. 1-8.

[39] *Op. cit.*, pp. 235-233.

But striking changes take place in the presentation of the Sapta-Mātṛkā in the Mukteśvar temple where they occur on an eight-petalled lotus carved on the ceiling of the Jagamohan of that 'gem of Orissan architecture'. For the first time we find the association of babies with all the Mātṛkās except Cāmuṇḍā.

During later times a few other Śakti shrines raised their head at Bhubaneswar ; the Gaurī temple contains a Śakti image as its presiding deity and, in the Ananta-Vāsudeva temple of the 13th century A.D., Ekānaṁśā is worshipped along with Balarāma and Vāsudeva. The images of Mahiṣāsuramardinī are found on the walls of the Vaitāla, Śiśireśvara and Mārkaṇḍeśvara temples and in the shrines on either side of the Bindu Sarovara. In some of the images, the demon is shown as a human figure with the head of a buffalo, while in others the human figure comes out of the beheaded body of the buffalo. All these indicate the popularity of Śaivism and Śāktism at Bhubaneswar and their interrelationship in the past ages. According to K. C. Panigrahi,[40] the puzzling erotic sculptures on the temple walls are partly due to the influence of the Tāntrikas and the Kāpālikas who profess curious philosophies about sex.

HĪRĀPUR—The small village of Hīrāpur, four miles east of Ekāmrakṣetra, was once a flourishing Śākta centre of the Yoginī cult as it has one of the very few Causaṭ-Yoginī temples of India. Besides this, Orissa also has the distinction of having another hypaethral circular Causaṭ-Yoginī temple at Rānīpur Jhariāl in the Balangir District.[41]

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[40] *Op. cit.*, p. 236.

[41] *Archaeological Survey of India*, Vol. XIII, pp. 132-36 ; *OHRJ*, Vol. III, No. 2, pp. 55-75.

In the Sanskrit literature, the Yoginīs have been represented as the attendants or the various manifestations of Durgā engaged in fighting with Śumbha and Niśumbha. The principal seven or eight Yoginīs are regarded as Mātṛkās; but their number at times was raised to sixtyfour when they danced in a circle after the death of Raktabīja.[42] The *Kathāsaritsāgara*, *Vetālapañcaviṁśati* and *Rājataraṅgiṇī* abound in stories about the Yoginīs.

Like other Yoginī shrines, the temple at Hīrāpur is circular in shape and is open to the sky to convey the idea that the Yoginīs roam about in a group of sixtyfour in the sky and, when they descend down, they form a circle. In the inner face of the circular wall of the enclosure, there are sixty niches each containing an exquisite black chlorite image of a Yoginī. Unlike the Yoginīs at Bherāghāṭ,[43] the majority of whom are seated figures, all the Yoginīs at Hīrāpur are carved in standing postures. They have different objects in the pedestals as their vehicles like ass, alligator, bull, boar, buffalo, crow, cock, duck, deer, drum, elephant, fish, frog, full-blown lotus, Garuḍa, horse, lion, lines of waves, lotus creeper, serpent, severed human head, scorpion, peacock, wheels, etc. While the images at Bherāghāṭ contain inscriptions, not a single image at Hīrāpur is inscribed and it is difficult to identify many of the images with our present knowledge of iconography.

Out of the existing 63 Yoginīs, only one image is ten-armed, 19 are four-armed and 43 two-armed. The ten-armed broken figure has a full-blown lotus as its pedestal and is worshipped as Mahāmāyā by the people. Some of the female figures with their faces resembling that of monkey, lion, snake, bear or elephant look terrific and have been carved with great artistic care. Some other Yoginīs are decorated with garlands of skulls or snakes; some raising elephant or lion over their heads look very fierce, while still others decked in ornaments like bracelet, armlet and girdle and having bejewelled crowns on their heads look lively and remarkable, being endowed with great artistic elegance and feminine grace and delicacy.

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[42] *IHQ*, Vol. XXXI, No. 4, pp. 362-74: 'Matsyendranāth and his Yoginī Cult' by V. W. Karambelkar.

[43] Cunningham, *Archaelogical Survey Report*, Vol. IX; R. D. Banerji, *Haihayas of Tripurī and their Monuments*, pp. 69-78.

In the middle of the enclosure is a tiny pavillion called Caṇḍīmaṇḍapa and, in its outer walls, we find three images of Yoginīs and four male deities, out of which 3 are ten-armed and the other one is four-armed. Carved carefully out of black chlorite, they are very fine specimens of plastic art and look animated by their natural vigour and grace. One of these four-armed images may be identified with Ajaikapāda Bhairava.

On either side of the passage leading to this tiny temple are also fixed two two-armed standing male deities. With their emaciated body, garlands of skull and anklets of snakes and howling jackals in the pedestal, they look exceedingly terrific: possibly they represent some Tāntric Ācāryas.

On the outer face of the circular enclosure, there are nine large female figures standing on severed human heads and are regarded as Kātyāyanīs. Although displaying great vigour, carved out of coarse sand stone, they lack in delicate treatment and look conventional and crude. Mrs. Devala Mitra[44] ascribes the construction of the temple to *circa* ninth-tenth century A.D. when the Brahmanic-tantric religion was very popular and predominant in society, while K. N. Mahapatra[45] considers it to be later than the

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[44] *Orissa Past and Present*, ed. P. Parija and S. C. Mukherjee, p. 42.

[45] *OHRJ*, Vol. II, No. 2, pp. 23-40.

Kapālinī (Vaitāl) temple at Bhubaneswar and assigns it to the 8th or early 9th century A.D.

PURĪ—The celebrated seat of Lord Jagannātha is also mentioned in the Śākta Tantras as a place where Jagannātha is Bhairava and Vimalā is Bhairavī.[46] The origin of Jagannātha and his worship along with Balabhadra and Subhadrā is a subject of controversy[47] and attempt has been made to identify Ekānaṁśā with Subhadrā as a manifestation of Durgā.[48] It is significant to note that the *Skanda Purāṇa* mentions Subhadrā as both the sister and consort of Viṣṇu.[49]

With the rise of the imperial Gaṅgas, Vaiṣṇavism assumed a position of pre-eminence and attempts were made to amalgamate the diverse cults and sects under the all-receptive roof of Jagannātha. The religious syncretism of the period is reflected in two striking panels in the Sun temple of Koṇāraka, where Jagannātha, Śiva-liṅga and Durgā are depicted side by side as being worshipped by a royal personage.

The influence of the Śākta cult is clearly visible in the mode of daily worship of Lord Jagannātha which is partly Vedic and partly Tāntric with the incorporation of various *nyāsas* like *sṛṣṭi-sthiti-saṁhāra-nyāsa* and *mātṛikā-nyāsa*, etc. It is equally interesting to notice the *pañca-tattva* of Tāntricism in the ritualistic worship of the deity wherein fish is substituted by green vegetables mixed with Hiṅgu, meat by Adāpācedi (ginger), wine by green-cocoanut water offered in bellmetal pots, grain by 'Kānti' (a preparation of flour and sugar) and Mithuna by the dance of Devadāsīs and the offering of Aparājitā flower. The Yogic-tantric system of Ṣaṭ-cakra also finds a prominent place in works like the *Premabhaktibrahmagītā* of Yaśovanta Dāsa and the *Vedāntasāraguptagītā*, *Virāṭagītā* and *Brahmāṇḍabhūgola* of Balarāma Dāsa. The builder of the Jagannātha temple, Coḍagaṅga, is described in the *Mādalā Pāñjī*[50] as well-versed in *mantras* and *yantras*.

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[46] उत्कले नाभिदेशश्च विरजाक्षेत्रमुच्यते ।
विमला सा महादेवी जगन्नाथस्तु भैरवः ॥

Vide *JRASB*, Vol. XIV, No. 1, *The Śākta* Piṭhas by D. C. Sircar, p. 45.

[47] H. K. Mahatab, *History of Orissa*, Lucknow University, Appendix II, pp. 150-69; P. Mukherjee, *History of Medieval Vaishnavism in Orissa*, pp. 7, 17-18; B. M. Pādhi, *Dāru Devatā* (Oriya).

[48] *OHRJ*, Vol. XI, No. 4, pp. 272-81.

[49] तस्य शक्तिस्वरूपेयं भगिनी स्त्री प्रकीर्त्तिता ।

Skanda Purāṇa, Chap. 19, verse 17.

The popularity of the Śakti cult in Śrīkṣetra is also proved by the temple of Vimalā and the images of the Seven Mothers worshipped near the Mārkaṇḍeśvara tank.[51] Described as seven sisters, according to the *Mādalā Pāñjī*, they were installed by Bhīmakesarī who was a great worshipper of the Devī.[52] The *Pāñjī* also mentions the construction of the Samalāi temple of Sambalpur by one Yadukesarī. Bhimakesarī of the temple chronicle is taken to be Bhīmaratha, the third ruler of the Somavaṁśī dynasty. The Mātṛkās of Purī with their babies reveal more delicate workmanship than the Jājpur Mothers ; but, unlike their counter parts, they are lost in meditation.

In the *Bata Abakāsha* by the poet-philosopher Balarāma Dāsa (16th century A.D.), Lord Jagannātha is described as being attended upon by sixtyfour Yoginīs, Katyāyanīs, Sapta-Matṛikā, Vimalā and Virajā. The work also mentions seventysix mother-goddesses like Śākambharī, Durgeśvarī, Kālī, Rāmacaṇḍī, Koṭheśvarī, Bhagavatī, Vāselī, Hadimāi,

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[50] *Mādalā Pāñjī* (Oriya), Prachi ed., pp. 22-23.

[51] R. D. Banerji, *History of Orissa*, Vol. II, Plates between pp. 400-01, 404-05, 416-17 ; *Memoirs of the Archaelogical Survey of India*, No. 44, Plates I, VI and IX.

[52] *Mādalā Pāñjī*, p. 19.

Kotamācaṇḍī, Brahmāṇī, Sāvitrī, Sāralācaṇḍī, Aparājitā, Piṅgalā, Sārakamā, Mārakamā, Heṅgulā, Kālapāti, Kāli Jai, Kālarātri, Kālikā, Pāteli, Kalasuni, Curcikā, Chāyā, Māyā, Vijayā, Caṇḍaghaṇṭā, Kālaghaṇṭā, Kālamukhī, Truti Khāi, Hemāśānti, Sarpamukhī, Jāgulāi, Hadabāi, Samalāi, Maṅgalā, Karuṇāi, Baruṇāi, Tārāsuni, Tāreṇi, Jāreṇi, Māreṇi, Sapanāceti, Kanakeśvarī, etc.[53] The *Prācīmāhātmya* of Dvija Trilocana also mentions deities like Caṇḍaghaṇṭā, Ramācaṇḍī, Bhagavatī, etc., while describing the Arka-kṣetra. Sāralā Dāsa[54] similarly mentions Ugratārā, Cāceśvarī, Bāseli, Maheśvarī, Kālikā, Kaṅkālī, Ahimukhī, Jambukī, etc., along with his chosen deity Sāralā.

The popularity of the Śākta cult gave an impetus to the development of literary activity. The Orissa State Museum collected several Tantric manuscripts[55] of earlier times and, in this context, mention may be made of *Durgāyajanadīpikā* by Jagannātha Ācārya, *Tāriṇīkulasudhātaraṅgiṇī* by Keśava Ratha, *Sāradārcanāpaddhati* by Godāvara Miśra and *Vanadurgāpūjā* by Raghunātha Dāsa.

Thus the Śakti cult had a very long and popular career in Orissa and still there are numerous shrines where the Devī is worshipped in various forms. The temples of Mohinī, Kapālinī and Gaurī at Bhubaneswar, Vimalā at Purī, Kīcakeśvarī at Khiching, Virajā at Jājpur, Maṅgalā at Kākatpur, Curcikā at Bānki, Ugratārā at Bhusandapur, Vārāhī at Chaurasi, Sāralā at Jhankad, Solapuamā and Caṇḍī at Cuttack, Sapta-Mātṛkā at Belkhandi in Kalahandi and Samaleśvarī at Sambalpur show the wide distribution of the cult in the different corners of Orissa.

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[53] *Bata Abakāsha* (Oriya) by Balarāma Dāsa, Prachi ed., pp. 17, 19, 20-21.

[54] *Mahābhārata* (Oriya) by Sāralā Dāsa, Droṇa Parva.

[55] *OHRJ* ,Vol. XII, No. 1, pp. 51-56.

X

Śakti Cult in Western India

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The objects unearthed at the protohistoric sites of the Indus valley culture appear to point to the prevalence of the cult of the Father-god and the Mother-goddess amongst the pre-Aryan peoples of North-Western Bhāratavarṣa. Recent explorations and excavations have shown that the said protohistoric civilization spread its influence over considerable parts of Western India. It is thus possible to think that the worship of the Mother-goddess was not unknown in Western India in the protohistoric times.

The Mahiṣamardinī form of the Mother-goddess has been popular in the Rajasthan area since very early times. The earliest representation of the deity is said to be offered by certain terracotta plaques discovered at Nagar near Uniyara in the Tonk District, which are now preserved in the Amber Museum. One of these has been assigned to the first century B.C. or first century A.D.[1] Stone images of the said deity have been discovered in large numbers from all parts of Rajasthan, and the Rajputs, both the rulers and the common man, are known to have been generally devoted to the goddess and to have been worshipping her under various local names.[2]

A stanza in adoration of the same form of the Mother-goddess is found at the beginning of an inscription from the Bhramaramātā temple near Chhoti Sadri not far from the Neemuch station on the Ajmer-Khandwa railway line.[3] The epigraph records the construction and consecration of a temple of the Devī in January 491 A.D. The goddess is described in the stanza referred to above as *Asura-dāraṇa-tīkṣṇa-śūlā* (holding a sharp spear piercing the Asura, *i.e.* Mahiṣ-āsura) and as *siṁh-ogra-yukta-ratham=āsthita-caṇḍavegā* (moving in terrific speed in a chariot drawn by a fierce lion). The second of the two epithets is interesting because, in the early representations of Mahiṣamardinī, the lion is sometimes absent and, even when present, does not usually figure as drawing a chariot carrying the goddess.[4]

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[1] V. S. Srivastava, *Catalogue and Guide to the Ganga Golden Jubilee Museum, Bikaner*, 1961, p. 5.

[2] *Loc. cit.*

It is well known that the *Bṛhatsaṁhitā* (LX. 19) by Varāhamihira, the celebrated Maga-Brāhmaṇa astronomer of the Ujjayinī school, refers to the worship of the Divine Mothers by the *Mātṛ-maṇḍala-vidaḥ* or *maṇḍala-krama-vidaḥ*. The first of the two variant readings, means 'those who know fully the circle of the Divine Mothers', while, in the other reading accepted by Utpala, the word *krama* means 'custom or rule sanctioned by tradition'. Utpala explains *maṇḍala-krama* as *pūjā-krama*, i.e. *maṇḍala-pūjā-krama* (traditional rules regarding the worship of the *maṇḍala*), and further says *mātṛṇāṁ sva-kalpa-vihita-vidhānen=aiva*, i.e. the worship of the Divine Mothers should be performed in accordance with their individual precepts. The same meaning of *krama* is evident from the names of such works as *Oḍiyana-Tārā-krama*, 'the traditional process of worship of the goddess Tārā of Uḍḍiyāna.'[5]

As regards the word *maṇḍala*, we have of course its use in expressions like *Siva-maṇḍala-dīkṣā*[6] and *Ārya-Tārā-maṇḍala-vidhi-nāma-sādhanā.*[7] In these cases, *maṇḍala* seems to mean 'the magic circle'. But the *Mātṛ-maṇḍala*, which is also referred to in the passage *Mātṛṇāṁ loka-mātṛṇāṁ maṇḍalam* occurring in a sixth century inscription from Udaygiri (Jhansi District, U.P.) recording the construction and consecration of a temple of the Divine Mothers, seems to be the same as the *Mātṛ-gaṇa* or 'the group of the Divine Mothers' as mentioned in the records of the Early Kadamba kings. These rulers claimed to have been favoured by the god Ṣaḍānana or Mahāsena (*i.e.* Skanda Kārttikeya) and the Divine Mothers or their group, while the Early Cālukyas of Badami are stated to have been nourished by the Seven Mothers described as *Sapta-loka-mātṛ*, often interpreted as 'the Seven Mothers of mankind', though the real meaning seems to be 'the Mothers of the Seven Worlds'.[8] The reference in all these cases seems to be to the collective worship of the Divine Mothers regarded as seven in number and probably known as the Circle of Seven.

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[3] *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXX, pp. 120ff.

[4] Banerjea, *Development of Hindu Iconography*, 2nd ed., pp. 498ff. ; cf. pp. 134ff.

[5] S. C. Vidyabhushan, *Bauddhastotrasaṁgraha*, Vol. I : *Sragdharāstotra*, p. xii.

Although the number of the Divine Mothers is often given as eight and sometimes also as nine and sixteen, originally the goddesses appear to have been counted as seven, enumerated in certain texts as (1) Brāhmī or Brahmāṇī, (2) Māheśvarī, (3) Kaumārī, (4) Vaiṣṇavī, (5) Vārāhī, (6) Indrāṇī, Aindrī or Māhendrī and (7) Cāmuṇḍā. But the names in the different lists giving the same number of goddesses, especially in the bigger lists, are not exactly the same. Even in the popular list of eight deities, Yāmī, Caṇḍikā, Carcikā, Nārasiṃhī, etc., are variously introduced.[9] The Purāṇas represent the Divine Mothers as attending usually on Kārttikeya, but sometimes on Śiva. Their association with Kārttikeya possibly determined their original number being seven, since the said god, though he is famous as Ṣaṇmātura or 'the son of Six Mothers', may be regarded as having seven mothers including the six Kṛttikās and Prvatī or Gaṅgā.[10]

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[6] *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXXII, p. 181.

[7] Cf. S. C. Vidyabhushan, *op. cit.*, p. xi.

[8] Cf. Sircar, *The Successors of the Sātavāhanas*, pp. 239-40.

It will be seen that, in Western India as in some other parts of the country, at least in the age of the Guptas, the Mother-goddess was worshipped in her individual aspects as well as collectively in a Circle of Seven. That there was a pronounced Tantric element in the Mother-goddess cult of the said area is clear from an Aulikara inscription of 423 A.D.[11] This epigraph records the construction and consecration of a temple of the Divine Mothers as also another of the god Viṣṇu by a person who had apparently both Śākta and Vaiṣṇava leanings. This is an interesting feature of West Indian religious life, and another important fact is that the temple of the Mothers is described as a terrible abode full of Ḍākinīs or female ghouls (*ḍākinī-samprakīrṇa*) and the goddesses themselves are represented as uttering loud and tremendous shouts of joy and stirring up the very oceans with the winds rising from the *tantra* or magical rites (*pramudita-ghan-ātyartha-nihrādinī* and *tantr-odbhūta-prabala-pavan-odvartit-āmbhonidhī*).

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[9] See *Śabdakalpadruma*, s.v. *mātṛkā*; Monier-Williams, *Sans.-Eng. Dict.*, s.v. *mātṛ*; Apte, *Pract. Sans.-Eng. Dict.*, s.v. *mātṛ*. Under *Bṛhatsaṁhitā*, LVII. 56, Utpala speaks of Vāruṇī and Kauberī in the list of the Mothers.

[10] Cf. Monier-Williams, *op. cit.*, s.v. *Kārttikeya*. There is a slab bearing the representation of only three Divine Mothers, viz. Brahmāṇī, Kaumārī and Vaiṣṇavī (Banerjea, *op. cit.*, p. 505). But, at the place of worship in question, there may have been other slabs bearing the figures of the other Mātṛkās.

[11] *Select Inscriptions*, pp. 284ff.

The above description of the Divine Mothers and their temple in a West Indian epigraph of the fifth century A.D. is especially interesting because, in the said region, the later phases of Buddhism do not appear to have influenced Tantricism in any appreciable degree. The case is thus totally unlike that of East Indian areas like Bengal where Brahmanical Tantricism and the later phases of Buddhism became almost inextricably mixed up particularly in the age of the Pālas who were Buddhists.

XI

Śakti Worship in Rājasthān[1]

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Śakti is the beginning and end of all forms of activities. Śakti is eternal and is the cause of creation and its dissolution. Śakti is worshipped as Kālī, Tāriṇī, Durgā, Ṣoḍaśī, Bhuvaneśvarī, Dhūmāvatī, Bagalā, Bhairavī, Chinnamastakā, Annapūrṇā, Vāgdevī, Kamlālayā,[2] Caṇḍī, Cāmuṇḍā, Śākambharī, etc. Śakti is also worshipped in the form of the Divine Mothers (Mātṛkās) of whom there are seven, eight or sixteen according to different enumerations.[3]

In Rājasthān, Śakti is worshipped in the forms of Kālī or Kālakā,[4] Durgā,[5] Cāmuṇḍā,[6] Aṣṭabhujā[7] and Ambā.[8]

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[1] The revised copy of the paper was received on the 20th June, 1965.—Ed.

[2] *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra*, trans. (The Great Liberation) by John Woodroffe (Arthur Avalon), p. 66.

[3] The story of the birth of the Mātṛkās is described in the Purāṇas. The *Varāha Purāṇa* states that eight Mātṛkās including Yogeśvarī represent eight bad mental qualities. The *Suprabhēdāgama* states that the seven Mātṛkās were created by Brahman.

[4] At Achalgarh (Mt. Abu.), Chitor, Nasirabad (near Ajmer), Dholpur and other places.

[5] The Bikaner Aṣṭādaśabhujā Durgā is the triumphant conception of Mahiṣāsuramardinī. This is the only temple of Durgā in Rājasthān. She is popularly known as Nāgnecjī. It is said that this image was brought from Kanauj and was kept in the village of Nāganā (near Jodhpur). See Bishweshwar Nath Reu, *Mārwār rājya kā Itihās*, Vol. I, p. 46. Rao Bika, who founded Bikaner, installed the image at Bikaner.

[6] At Jodhpur, Jaswantpur, Bhinmāl, Ajmer and other places.

[7] Near Bhainsolgarh (Dist. Udaipur).

[8] At Amber. The Kachchwāha king Kankal Rāo, son of Dulhā Rāo, conquered Āmber in 1037 A.D., installed the image of Ambāmātā and built a temple over it.

Besides the five forms, Śakti is worshipped under local names, viz. Karṇimātā,[9] Mokalmātā,[10] Piplādmātā,[11] Saciyāmatā,[12] Khokrimātā,[13] Śākambharī,[14] Āśāpurīdevī,[15] Kinsariyā or Kaivasamātā,[16] Khimalmātā,[17] Kailādevī,[18] Sakrāīmātā,[19] Jinamātā,[20] Susānimātā,[21] Dadhimātā,[22] Sīlamātā,[23] Cauthmātā,[24] etc. Śakti was worshipped in the form of Mātṛkās at Mandor[25] and other places.

Śakti worship in Rājasthān started as early as the 1st century A.D. The ancient site of Nagar[26] has yielded a few terracotta plaques of Mahiṣāsuramardinī (now in the Museum of Āmber) of the 1st century A.D.[27] The excavations at Rairh[28] have yielded a very large number of nude and semi-nude Mother-goddesses. Sāmbhar[29] has yielded a terracotta plaque (of white clay) of Mahiṣāsuramardinī, believed to be of the 1st century A.D. The head of the plaque is broken. The Gangdhār[30] inscription of M.S. 480 speaks of Tāntric[31] influence on a worshipper of Viṣṇu. The inscription on the temple of Bhramaramātā[32] of V.S. 547 mentions Śakti worship.[33] A terracotta plaque of Mahiṣāsuramardinī from Bhadrakālī[34] (Dist. Ganganagar) of the late Kuṣāṇa or early Gupta period (now in the Museum of Bikaner) goes to prove the existence of Śakti worship in Rājasthān in the 4th century A.D. The inscription on the temple of Dadhimātā at Gothmānglod of G.E. 289 or 608 A.D. begins with a prayer to Sarasvatī, but also describes Śakti worship.[35] The Varmalāta inscription (Vasantgarh) of V.S. 682 speaks of Kṣemaṅkarīmātā.[36] In the Daulatpura copper plate[37] of V. S. 900, Nāgabhaṭa, Bhoja and others are described as worshippers of Bhagavatī. The plate is embossed with a figure of the four-armed Devī, and a lion is seen sitting beside her.[38] The Kinsariyāmātā[39] or Kevāyamātā inscription of V.S. 1056 speaks of Kālī and Kātyāyanī.[40] The Vaṭayakṣiṇī temple inscription at Ghotārsi[41] speaks of the goddess Vaṭayakṣiṇī[42] which, according to G. H. Ojha, was another name of Durgā.

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[9] At Deshnokh, about 16 miles from Bikaner. She is the Kuladevi of the royal house of Bikaner.

[10] At Bāli.

[11] At Pipār.

[12] At Osiān.

[13] At Tivri.

[14-15] At Sambhar. Poet Jayāṇaka, author of the *Pṛithvīrājavijayamahākāvya*, describes the worship of Śākambharī and Āśāpūrīdevī by the Cauhāns.

[16] At Parvatsar (Kinsariyāmātā inscription of V.S. 1056). See *Ind.Ant.*, Vol. XLII, 1913, pp. 267-69.

[17] At Vasantgarh (inscription of Varmalāta, V.S. 682). See *Ep.Ind.*, Vol. IX, p. 187.

[18] Near Karauli.

[19] Near Khāndela in Sekhāwati (inscription on the temple). See *Ep.Ind.*, Vol. XXVII, p. 27.

[20] At Raivāsā, about 14 miles from Sikar.

[21] At Morkhānā, about 14 miles from Deshnokh (inscription of V.S. 1229); for another inscription of V.S. 1573, see *JASB*, N.S., Vol. XII, 1917, No. 4, pp. 210-17.

[22] Cf. the Gothmānglod (Dist. Nāgor) Dadhimātā temple inscription of G.E. 289. See *Ep.Ind.*, Vol. XI, p. 299.

[23] At Āmber (Jaipur).

[24] At Barwārā, near Sawaimadhopur (W.Ry.).

[25] Mandor is near Jodhpur. See *JBRS*, Vol. XLIII, parts 1-2, 1957.

[26] Near Jaipur.

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[27] R. C. Agrawala, *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. XXI(2), 1957, pp. 123-30, Pl. I ; *Lalit Kalā*, Nos. 1-2, pp 72, 74.

[28] K. N. Puri, *Excavations at Rairh* (in 1938-1939 and 1939-1940), p. 26, Pls. XII and XIII.

[29] Daya Ram Sahni, *Excavations at Sambhar.*

[30] Near Jhālāwār.

[31] *CII*, Vol. III.

[32] At Chhotisādri near Udaipur.

[33] *Archaelogical Survey of India*, Annual Report, 1929-30, p. 187.

[34] *Lalit Kalā*, No. 8, Pl. XXVI, fig. 23.

[35] *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XI, p. 299.

[36] G. H. Ojha, *Sirohī rājya kā Itihās*, p. 29.

[37] Found in the village of Śiva near Didwana.

Śakti worship became very popular in different parts of Rājasthān in the early medieval period. Chandrabhag Patan in Eastern Rājasthān was an important centre as is clear from a large number of sculptures of Mahiṣāsuramardinī[43] found in that area. The Mahiṣāsuramardinī temple sculptures of Ābāneri, Pārānagar and Osiān throw ample light on the popularity of Śakti worship. The temples of Jinamātā and Sakrāīmātā are also important from this point of view. The temple of Saciyāmātā at Osiān deserves special mention. The principal back niche perserves an image of Śakti in the triumphant mood of Mahiṣāsuramardinī. She is addressed as Saccikā or Saciyā in the inscriptions of V.S. 1234 and 1236.[44] It is surprising to note that the Jains of Mārwār worshipped Śakti in this form. The temple of Ambikā at Jagat[45] (10th century A.D.) has an important bearing on the Śakti worship in Mewār.[46] The exterior of the main sanctum is studded with elegant sculptures of the eight-armed Mahiṣāsuramardinī. The three niches on the three sides of the temple depict Mahiṣāsuramardinī in three different styles. The principal niche facing west shows Durgā charging the buffalo-demon who has come out of the severed head of the buffalo ; on the niche facing south the goddess is seen twisting the neck of the buffalo, and on the niche facing the north the goddess is seen fighting the buffalo-demon in human form.[47] The tank outside the temple has images of Mahiṣāsuramardinī with four arms, twisting the neck of the buffalo-demon and combating the demon in human form. The Ambikā temple[48] is therefore unique from this point of view and is perhaps the only temple in India where Durgā is shown fighting the buffalo-demon in three different styles.

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[38] *Ep.Ind.*, Vol. V, p. 208.

[39] About four miles from Parvatsar (Dist. Jodhpur).

[40] *Ep.Ind.*, Vol. XII, p. 59.

[41] Near Pratapgarh.

[42] *Ep.Ind.*, Vol. XIV, pp. 183-84 ; G. H. Ojha, *Pratāpgarh rājya kā Itihās*, pp. 22-23.

[43] Near Jhalawar Museum.

[44] *JBRS*, Vol. XLI(1), 1935, p. 1-12.

[45] About 34 miles from Udaipur.

[46] *Arts Asiatiqua*, Paris, 10 (i), June, 1964, pp. 44-65 and Plates,

Śakti worship in Rājasthān has made a deep impact on the iconography of the region. The terracottas of Mahiṣāsuramardinī in the Amber and Bikaner Museums need a brief description. Durgā as Mahiṣāsuramardinī,[49] in the beautiful plaque of the Amber Museum, holds a rectangular shield in her upper left arm and a *vajra* in the upper right arm ; with the lower left arm, she is holding the tongue of the buffalo-demon and, with the lower right arm, she is pressing him back. There is no *triśūla* ; but a small lion is sitting at the foot of the Devī. In another terracotta of the Amber Musuem, the buffalo-demon is shown between the legs of the Devī who is seen pressing the horns of the buffalo with great force. In a group of Mahiṣāsuramardinī sculptures of the mediaeval period at Āmber (Nos. 103, 154), the head of the buffalo is shown completely severed from the main body of the animal, and the demon emerging out of it in human form.

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[47] Also at Ellora, Mahabalipuram and other places.

[48] *Viśveśvarānanda Indological Journal*, Hoshyarpur, Vol. I(i), Pl. VII, p. 136.

[49] *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. XXI(2), 1957, pp. 123-30 ; Pl. I ; *Lalit Kalā*, Nos. 1-2.

The Museum of Bikaner is rich in terracottas of the late Kuṣāṇa or early Gupta period. The terracotta plaque of Mahiṣāsuramardinī discovered by L. P. Tessitori from Bhadrakālī (Dist. Ganganagar) is different from the Āmber plaques. In this plaque, the Devī is seen in the act of killing the buffalo-demon with a *triśūla* which she is holding in her upper right arm, the upper left arm being broken ; with the lower left arm she is holding the head of the buffalo-demon and pressing it back. The lower right arm is broken ; but it seems that there was some weapon in it. There is no shield or lion. The Devī in the act of killing is riding on the buffalo-demon.[50]

A yellow stone plaque (in the Bikaner Museum) of Ghaṇṭālīdevī[51] (local name of Mahiṣāsurmardinī) brought from Pugal deserves a brief description. The inscription[52] on the plaque speaks of the installation of the Devī by *Mahārāja* Kalhaṇa of Pugal in V.S. 1475 or 1418-19 A.D. The face of the eight-handed Devī is mutilated ; but the demon in human form is seen coming out of the severed body of the buffalo.

The temple sculptures of Osiān, Ābāneri and Pārānagar are fine specimens of Durgā as Mahiṣāsuramardinī. The Ābāneri sculpture was one of the exhibits in the Art exhibition held in Germany.[53] In this sculpture, the Devī is ten-handed, bearing in her right arms *triśūla, khaḍga,* etc., and in the left arms *pāśa, paraśu,* etc. She has big long eyes and high developed breasts, with broad tight thighs and an appearance of full youth coming on her. She is seen in the act of killing the buffalo-demon with *triśūla*. Below is the headless body of the demon, from whose neck the demon in human form is seen emerging with a sword in his hand. There is no lion ; the Devī in the act of killing the buffalo-demon is riding over him.

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[50] *Lalit Kalā*, No.8, Pl. XXVI, fig. 23.

[51] V. S. Srivastava, *Catalogue and Guide to Bikaner Museum*, p. 13 ; H. Goetz, *Art and Architecture of Bikaner State*, p. 189, fig. 20.

[52] D. Sharma, *Rajasthani*, Calcutta, No. 1, pp. 13-15.

[53] Exhibition held at Villa Hügel, Essen (Germany), from May 14 to September 30, 1959.

At Amjhara, four statues of the Devī are seen twisting the head of the buffalo-demon. There is an absence of the chopped off head of the buffalo in the images before the 10th century. The idea of cutting the head of the buffalo-demon is a popular theme in Northern India ; but, in the south, Durgā is shown standing on the severed head of the buffalo-demon.

The Amjhara-Dungarpur group of sculptures has a few images of emaciated Cāmuṇḍā. It is curious to note that not a single image of Mahiṣāsurmardinī of the 6th century A.D. has yet been discovered in Rājasthān.

The image of Kālī[54] in the Museum at Ajmer is unique. The Devī in black marble with high glaze and polish was found at Āuwā (Dist. Pāli). She has ten heads and fiftyfour hands, trampling on the back of a human body (probably Śiva) on a full blown lotus pedestal. Her main face is with tongue out ; in standing posture, she has a garland of human heads. Of her ten faces, the five commencing from the right depict those of horse, elephant, bear, hog, etc. The four faces on the left are those of lion, dog, monkey, and jackal. She has fiftyfour hands holding weapons of diflerent kinds. She is seen wearing a garland of human heads, a necklace, a serpent, and also a sacred thread. In the same Museum, a head of Kālī[55] with three eyes and tongue coming out, and three sculptural pieces of Cāmuṇḍā[56] with emaciated body and sunken eyes standing or sitting over a human body can be seen.

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[54] No. I(93), 268 of the Rajputana Museum, Ajmer (Rājasthān).

[55] No. I(95), 524 of the same Museum.

Mātṛkā worship was also popular in Rājasthān. A large number of sculptural pieces preserved in the Museum of Ajmer, and also a number of Mātṛkā images found at Mandor, Nagda, Chitorgarh, Ramgarh, Kekinda, Phalodi Osian and other places, bear testimony to this fact. The worship of Sapta or Aṣṭa-mātṛkā was in vogue at Mandor, Nagda, Chitorgarh, Ramgarh and Kekinda. The Aṣṭa-Mātṛkā of Mandor deserve a brief description. The Mātṛkās are carved out of a single rock that carries an inscription of V.S. 742 which refers to the construction of a stepwell. Every standing Mātṛkā is about 1½ feet high. The images are broken and deshaped. Beginning from Gaṇapati at the left, the Mātṛkās have two and four hands alternately. The absence of children in the lap of the Mātṛkās is a noteworthy feature.

As regards Kekinda (modern Jasnagar, near Merta city), the Aṣṭa-mātṛkā are carved out on the shrine door of the Nīlakaṇṭha Mahādeva temple of the 10th century A.D. There the Mātṛkās are shown with children in their laps and the *vāhanas* standing by their side. We also find Aṣṭamātṛka on the door of the Brāhmaṇī temple at Phalodi (near Merta). We have an incomplete set of Mātṛkās (only Aindrī and Vārāhī) on the temple of Saciyāmātā at Osian.

On the literary side, many poets and *cāraṇas* of Rājasthān composed verses and songs in praise of Mahiṣāsuramardinī, Kālī, Cāmuṇḍā, Mātājī, Karṇimātā, Nāganecjī and others. A very large number of Rajāsthānī manuscripts,[57] mostly illustrated, give us sufficient proof of the popularity of Śakti worship. Folk songs written by Moonkhan Mev[58] of Alwar and Jaichand Yati,[59] a Jain poet, show that even Muslims and Jains worshipped Śakti or composed verses in her praise.

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[56] Nos. 190(72) 91(91) and 92(302).

[57] In the Anup Sanskrit Library, Bikaner.

I have described the antiquity and growth of Śakti worship in Rājasthān ; but it is curious to note that in the late mediaeval period Śakti worship gradually lost its popularity. The royal houses of Rājasthān became worshippers of Śiva or Viṣṇu with a tolerant attitude towards Jainism.

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[58] *Maru Bhārati*, July 1957, No. 3, pp. 68-74.

[59] *Ibid.*, October 1964, No. 3, pp. 29-32.

XII

Iconography of Ardhanārīśvara on a Tripurā Coin

A. N. Lahiri, Calcutta University

About three years back while passing through Calcutta I was kindly introduced by Professor D. C. Sircar to Sri K. C. Barman, a retired officer of the West Bengal Civil Service, who has a collection of Tripurā coins. On my request Sri Barman graciously allowed me to examine the coins and take their plaster-of-Paris casts for subsequent study. These coins were noticed in the *Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy*, 1961-62. Out of the eight Tripurā coins of Sri Barman's collection, one issued by king Vijayamāṇikya proved to be quite interesting from the standpoint of iconography.

It may be noted here that Sri Barman published his Tripurā coins, including the above Vijayamāṇikya piece, in the Sunday edition of the *Ānanda Bāzār Patrikā* dated the 4th January 1948 (19th Pauṣa 1354 B.S.). When we noticed the coin in the aforesaid *Annual Report*, this particular issue of the newspaper was not available to us at Ootacamund ; we have gone through it only recently in the National Library. The coin under study is described as No. 8 in Sri Barman's article. It bears on the obverse a five-line legend in somewhat archaic Bengali characters and on the reverse the figure of a deity seated on two animals together with a date in the Śaka era. Sri Barman has very correctly read the obverse legend but failed to identify the deity on the reverse as well as its *vāhanas*. He has taken the figure of the deity for that of Mahiṣamardinī and the two animals for lions.

When we began to study the coin, the figure of the deity proved to be a puzzle and it was a problem to identify it. It sits on two animals facing opposite directions, and, curiously enough, has two hands on one side but as many as five hands on the other. Nowhere did we come across such a curious divinity. The problem was ultimately solved when we were able to definitely identify the two animals. The one on the right is apparently the lion of the Tripurā coins, while the other on the left is unmistakably a bull as its hump indicates. It is also to be observed that the bull is on that side of the deity which has two hands, whereas the other side having five hands is on the side of the lion. The figure evidently then is a new composite aspect of Ardhanārīśvara combining the *caturbhuja* Śiva and the *daśabhujā* Durgā, and consequently the Śiva side rests on Nandin and the Durgā rides on the *simha*.

The clue to this interesting concept of Ardhanārīśvara may be found in the coin-legends of the Tripurā rulers, most of whom declare themselves as worshippers of Śiva-Durgā (cf. the expressions *Śiva-Durgā-pada-rajo-madhupa* of the coins of Dharmamāṇikya, and *Śiva-Durgā-pade* of those of Kṛshṇamāṇikya, Rājadharamāṇikya, Rāmagaṅgāmāṇikya and Kāśīcandramāṇikya). Vijayamāṇikya who was an early Tripurā king ruling in the middle of the sixteenth century conceived this aspect of Ardhanārīśvara which is half Śiva and half Durgā. None of his descendants, however, is known to have depicted this figure on coins, though most of them put the figure of the peculiar lion with the *triśūla* on its back, which is the characteristic emblem of Tripurā rulers, introduced on coins by Ratnamāṇikya I, the earliest Tripurā ruler to issue coins in Śaka 1201. It is now clear that while the lion represents the *simhavāhanā* Durgā, the *triśūla* on its back has an unmistakable association with her consort Śiva.

However, we would like here to describe the coin fully :

Obverse : In circular border, five-line legend in Bengali characters reading—(1) *Lākṣāsnāyi* (2) *śrī-śrī-Tripurā-ma-* (3) *heśa-Vijayamāṇi-* (4) *kyadeva-Śrī-Lakṣmī-* (5) *rāṇidevyau.*

Reverse : In a circle having pellets around, the composite figure of Ardhanārīśvara with its left half having five hands seated on a lion facing right and its right half having two hands seated on a bull. Date in exergue—*Śaka 1*[*4*][*]2.

PART II

TĀRĀ

Proceedings of the Seminar

Second Day

Date : 10th April, 1965.

Time : 10-30 A.M. to 1 P.M.

Subject : Iconography of Tārā.

Place : Teachers' Common Room, Asutosh Building, Calcutta University.

President : Prof. S. K. Saraswati, Victoria Memorial, Calcutta (in the absence of Dr. J. N. Banerjea owing to indisposition).

Principal Speaker : Dr. K. K. Dasgupta, Calcutta University.

Participants besides the President and the Principal Speaker :—

1.	Prof. T. V. Mahalingam	Madras University
2.	Prof. B. P. Sinha	Patna University
3.	Dr. R. N. Mehta	Baroda University
4.	Dr. R. S. Gupte	Marathwada University
5.	Dr. Sm. B. Lahiri	Jadavpur University
6.	Sri K. S. Behera	Utkal University
7.	Sri B. D. Chatterjee	Burdwan University
8.	Sri P. K. Majumdar	Rajasthan University
9.	Dr. K. K. Ganguly	Calcutta University
10.	Prof. D. C. Sircar	Calcutta University
11.	Sri D. Mukherjee	Calcutta University
12.	Sri D. C. Bhattacharya	Centre of Advanced Study in A.I.H.C., Calcutta University
13.	Sri S. Banerjee	Do
14.	Dr. S. R. Banerjee	Do
15.	Dr. B. N. Banerjee	Sanskrit College, Calcutta
16.	Sri N. N. Bhattacharya	Chinsurah, Hooghly Dist., West Bengal
17.	Sri S. Chattopadhyay	Burdwan University

and others

Reporters : Sm. Kusum Jalan and
Sri Sarojit Dutta

Morning Session

The seminar opened at 10-30 a.m. when Prof. D. C. Sircar expressed his regret in announcing that Dr. J. N. Banerjea was unable to preside over that day's deliberations owing to illness. He then invited Prof. S. K. Saraswati to take the chair and conduct the deliberations of the Seminar in place of Dr. Banerjea.

Dr. K. K. Dasgupta then initiated the discussion with his paper on the iconography of Tārā. In tracing the origin of the conception of the deity, he differed from H. Sastri and referred to iconographic texts and iconic representations in order to prove that the Buddhists borrowed the conception of the Brahmanical Tārā not earlier than the tenth century A.D. Dr. Dasgupta also disagreed with Sastri's view that Tārā was originally worshipped in Ladakh and was introduced in India through Nepal. In his opinion, the conception of Tārā possibly originated in India, though the exact area of origin cannot be determined. He further referred to the various forms of the goddess as known from different texts and representations.

In commenting on Dr. Dasgupta's views, Dr. Gupte pointed to the numerous representations of Tārā at Ellora and other places in the region of Western India, the earlier of them at Ellora going to the sixth and seventh centuries A.D., and observed that the cult of the Buddhist goddess originated in Western India a few centuries earlier than the tenth century. In his opinion, Tārā was the goddess of navigation and was worshipped for their protection by traders who had to travel by dangerous routes on the seas and through forests. Dr. Gupte felt that the discovery of numerous representations of Tārā in Western India suggests the great popularity of the goddess in that part of the country.

Prof. D. C. Sircar commented on the views of both

Dr. Dasgupta and Dr. Gupte. As regards the former he pointed out that the Buddhist goddess Tārā was a very important deity at least as early as the fifth or sixth century A.D. when Candragomin wrote the eulogy of the goddess apparently worshipped in Candradvīpa in Southern Bengal. In his opinion, the absence of any reference to the *Tārāstotra* by Candragomin, who lived in Candradvīpa and referred in his *Grammar* to the Gupta victory over the Hūṇas during the reign of Skandagupta or Narasiṁhagnpta in the fifth or sixth century A.D., was an unfortunate ommission in Dr. Dasgupta's paper. As regards Dr. Gupte's views, Prof. Sircar observed that the said Tārā of Candradvīpa in the present Buckergunge District of East Pakistan required some time in becoming so famous in Candragomin's age and was therefore being worshipped in Eastern India considerably earlier than the date of the Ellora sculptures. He also drew attention to the Chinese tradition, according to which the Buddhist goddess Tārā resided at the foot of a hill near the Southern Sea or Bay of Bengal, even though she is stated to have been chiefly worshipped in Tibet and Mongolia. This tradition would appear to support, in Prof. Sircar's opinion, the East Indian origin of the cult of Tārā. He also suggested that the merger of a number of local deities with Tārā may have been responsible for the development of her various forms.

Prof. Saraswati also observed that, by the fifth and sixth centuries A.D., the worship of Tārā was well established in Eastern India. With reference to the claim of Western India as the original home of Tārā, he pointed out that, in that region, the figures of Cuṇḍā have been found in larger number than those of Tārā.

Sri N. N. Bhattacharya said that, in the *Ṛgveda*, *Tāra* is an appellation of the god Śiva, while Prof. Sircar pointed out that Hiuen-tsang mentions 'To-lo'-Bodhisattva without specifying the sex of the deity.

Dr. R. N. Mehta wanted to know whethere there are terracotta figures of the goddess, and Prof. Sircar pointed out that, even now in Bengal, the images of gods and goddesses are generally made of clay and that such images are thrown into the waters of lakes or rivers after worship. Prof. Sinha pointed out the popularity of stone images in the later epoch. Prof. Sircar said that, when Bengal and Bihar formed parts of the same empire, the import of stone from the latter region by the former for the construction of images may have been facilitated.

Prof. T. V. Mahalingam observed that the recent discovery of an image of Tārā in the ruins of Nagarjunikonda, belonging to the third century A.D., throws some light on the origin and antiquity of Tārā. Most of the delegates, however, had no knowledge of this image.

In comparing Tārā with Durgā, Dr. Gupte wanted to know whether Durgā was also represented with a lotus. Dr. Mehta drew attention to Sirimā-devatā (Śrī) of Barhut and Padmāvatī of the Jains, who hold the lotus, and wanted to know whether Buddhist Tārā and Jain Padmāvatī may be later modifications of the older Sirimā.

Dr. Dasgupta considered it possible while Prof. Sircar did not find any similarity between the conceptions of Sirimā (Śrī) and Tārā.

Dr. Mehta said that the origin of Tārā and others may have been the *saumya* form of Śrī. But a critic pointed out that the aspects of Tārā are *ugra* or fierce, so that she cannot be identified with Sirimā (Śrī). Prof. Sircar and Prof. Saraswati, however, said that the earlier forms of Tārā are not fierce.

Prof. S. K. Saraswati further pointed out that every deity has both the *saumya* and *ugra* forms, so that arguments on this basis would not lead us far. But he observed that the *ugra* forms were developed later on due to Tantric influence.

Sri B. D. Chatterjee then wanted to know the relations of Tārā with the goddesses of navigation. In reply, a story in the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* was cited, and Dr. Gupte emphasised the great help rendered by the traders to the Buddhist Church and the importance of Tārā in helping people in crossing the ocean. Dr. B. N. Banerjee observed that Tārā is not exclusively the goddess of navigation since the Tibetan form of her name indicates that she helped people in crossing the difficulties of all kinds. Prof. Sircar thought that the name *Tārā* may mean 'the saviour of people from difficulties.' Dr. K. K. Ganguly then observed that the stars (Sanskrit *tārā*) guided traders on the seas and in the forests, so that the conception of Tārā may have originated from the star cult. Prof. Sircar considered the suggestion associating *Tārā* and the stars (*tārā*) as interesting. But Dr. S. R. Banerjee thought that *tārā* in the sense of 'a star' is a later modification of *tārakā*. Prof. Sircar, however, observed that the use of the word *tārā* to mean 'a star' in Indian literature is earlier than the development of the Tārā cult, which is not much earlier than the Gupta age.

Sri K. S. Behera wanted to know as to which one of the two-armed and four-armed forms of Tārā is earlier. But the question could not be answered satisfactorily. Sri Behera then asked whether there are representations of Tārā with more heads than one. Prof. Saraswati replied that there is reference to Tārā with three or four heads.

Sri N. N. Bhattacharya then read his paper in which he commented on the theory postulating a Sino-Tibetan origin of Tārā, even though he referred to the interchange of ideas between India and China and the relations between Taoism of China and Tantrism of India.

Sri S. Banerjee pointed out that Khadūravāsinī Tārā is mentioned in a manuscript of the *Trikāṇḍaśeṣa*. But Prof. Sircar observed that *Khadūravāsinī* is a copyist's error for *Khadiravāsinī* which is the same as Khadiravanī, a well-known name of Śyāmā-Tārā being Kadiravanī-Tārā.

Prof. Sircar then asked whether any of the scholars present could throw any light on the goddess Trailokyavijayā known from the Chandil inscription of about the eighth century. But there was no satisfactory reply to the question.[1]

Sri D. C. Bhattacharya read his article on an unknown form of Tārā. He drew pointed attention to the representation of Tārā with thousand heads and thousand hands as found in certain texts still in manuscript.

Prof. Sircar then read his paper on the Tārā of Candradvīpa who, in his opinion, was one of the most celebrated Buddhist deities worshipped in Eastern India since the age of the Guptas. He suggested that the same goddess of Candradvīpa in the present Buckergunge District of East Pakistan is referred to in Chinese tradition as the deity of the same name whose abode was located near a hill in the vicinity of the Southern Sea or Bay of Bengal. Prof. Sircar further argued that the representation of the same deity was adopted by the Pālas of Bengal and Bihar as the emblem on their banner because Candradvīpa, otherwise called Vaṅgāladeśa, was their original home. He referred to Tāranātha's account of the rise of Gopāla in Bhaṅgaladeśa (Vaṅgāladeśa).

Prof. Sinha wanted to know whether there was a hill in the Buckergunge District. Prof. Sircar and Prof. Saraswati thought that even one of the big mounds, in which the area abounded, could have been regarded as a hill.

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[1] Sri S. Chattopadhyay's note on the goddess, included in this volume, was received some time after the seminar.—Ed.

Dr. K. K. Ganguly pointed out that the location of Tārā's abode near the Bay of Bengal has something to do with the great maritime activity in the Pāla age and Tārā's importance to the navigators as their saviour. He also thought that the Tārā cult originated in Eastern India and that her conception may have been imported to Nagarjunikonda by sea-faring merchants.

Prof. Saraswati referred to Prof. Sircar's suggestions regarding the early phase of the Tārā cult and emphasised the popularity of Tārā in the age of the Pālas. He drew attention to the Tārā temple built near the Buddhist monastery at Somapura in North Bengal, which was founded during the age of the early Pālas about the first half of the ninth century A.D.

The morning session of the Seminar closed for lunch at 1 p.m.

There were no more papers to be read in the afternoon. Prof. Saraswati therefore closed the Seminar and heartily thanked the scholars including representatives of various universities, who attended the Seminars, contributed papers and participated in the deliberations. He specially thanked Dr. J. N. Banerjea who had already delivered five out of his six lectures and also presided over the first day's Seminar in spite of his failing health. He also thanked Prof. D. C. Sircar who had to make the arrangements for the second series of Lectures and Seminars in the absence of Prof. N. R. Ray, the Director of the Centre. Thanks were also offered to the members of the Centre, whose labours contributed to the success of the Seminars.

Prof. Saraswati then announced that, Dr. J. N. Banerjea being too ill to deliver his sixth and last lecture in the afternoon, his lecture would be read out by Prof. D. C. Sircar.

Reported by :

Sm. Kusum Jalan and
Sri Sarojit Dutta

I

Iconography of Tārā[1]

K. K. Dasgupta, Calcutta University

Tārayiṣyāmyahaṁ nātha nānābhayamahārṇavāt /
tena Tāreti māṁ loke gāyanti munipuṅgavāḥ //

'The eminent sages in the world call me Tārā because, O Lord, I take [my worshippers] across the ocean of various dangers.'

The Buddhist goddess Tārā thus explains the significance of her name. Indeed, this is also the etymological meaning of the name Tārā. Derived from the root *tār* (*tṛ* + *ṇic*), Tārā is the goddess who makes others, i.e., the devotees, cross the sea or ocean. Figuratively, she helps her devotees to cross the sea of trouble, or broadly speaking, the very ocean of existence.

Tārā is the most popular goddess in the Buddhist pantheon. She holds the same place in Buddhism, as the goddess Durgā has in Brahmanism. The Buddhists consider Tārā to be the great Mother-goddess, the symbol of primordial female energy and, more, they conceive her as the consort to Avalokiteśvara, the symbol of the primordial male principle. As will be evident from the *sādhana* just mentioned, she enables her devotees to surmount all sorts of dangers and calamities and, according to one *sādhana*, a mere prayer to the goddess is sure to remove the eight *mahābhayas* (great dangers). According to another *sādhana*, those who meditate on the Bhagavatī, all the eight supernormal powers fall at their feet, and other small powers come to them as a matter of course. As the great mother, she is also known as 'the mother of all the Buddhas and Boddhisattvas.' The Tibetans, who also look upon her as the great mother, aver that she can be approached directly without the help of any intermediary, which is not the case with other divinities of the first rank. This may account for her popularity.

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[1] The revised copy of the paper was received on the 24th July, 1965—Editor.

The concept of Tārā, as briefly outlined above, thus makes a comparison between the Buddhist Tārā and Hindu Durgā necessary. She is as great as Durgā and figures as the counterpart or Śakti of Avalokiteśvara just as Durgā is the Śakti of Śiva. The name Durgā also etymologically means the deity who removes grave dangers. A perusal of the Durgāstotras in the *Mahābhārata* (IV. 6 and VI. 23) would show that the Hindu devotees of Durgā conceived her as the great savioures who, being prayed to, delivers her devotees from terrors like captivity, drowning, harrassment by robbers, etc. (for similar functions of Tārā, see p. 122, notes 1-2). It may be noted that Tāriṇī and Tārā as names of the Devī appear in the *Mahābhārata* and later Puranic and Tantric texts respectively. The earliest Puranic text which contains the name Tārā (*Tārānāma-Mahāśakti*), so far I have been able to trace, is the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* (XXXI. 12) the date of the composition of which is not far from that of the *Mahābhārata*. In other words, Durgā and Tārā not only etymologically but also conceptually came to be regarded as identical in the fourth-fifth century A.D.

The concept of the Hindu Mother-goddess, the quintessence of the eternal female principle, has been proved to be of considerable antiquity. The antiquity may be traced back at least to the seventh-sixth century B.C., the time of the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, a text which describes a goddess named Ambikā (another name of Durgā) as the consort of Rudra (X. 18). If the Brahmanical feminine divinity, whatever may be her name, is proved to have emerged in the pre-Christian centuries, there seem to be ample reason to believe that the Mother-goddess of the Buddhist pantheon owes her origin to her Brahmanical counterpart.

Now when and how did the cult of Tārā emerge? It is generally held that Asaṅga grafted the Yoga system on to the Mahāyāna school sometime in the fourth-fifth century A.D. and, as a result, the female principle came to be adored along with the male principle in the same manner in which the Hindus worshipped Śiva and Śakti or Devī, representing the male and female principles respectively. The Mahāyāna form of Buddhism underwent notable transformation under the influence of Tantricism. In this connection it should be remembered, however, that Tāntricism provided a common cultural background to both Hinduism and Buddhism. Conceptual and iconic changes were thus simultaneously introduced in both Hindu and Buddhist pantheons.

Archaeologically, no image of the Buddhist Tārā has as yet been found that can be definitely assigned to a period earlier than the sixth century A.D. Some of the sculptural representations of Tārā in the Ellora caves (numbering 25) are assignable to the sixth century A.D. (Cave 11). Tārā in Cave II appears also in the company of her consort Avalokiteśvara. One representation of Tārā in the Kanheri cave has been assigned to the fifth century A.D.; but the dating is not beyond doubt. In any case, there are reasons to believe that the cult of Tārā was established by the sixth century A.D. and some images of the goddess found at Sirpur in Madhya Pradesh have been sought to be ascribed to the seventh century A.D.

It may be noted here that a good number of sculptural representations of Tārā have been found in the Buddhist caves of the Western Deccan such as Ellora, Aurangabad, Kanheri, Nasik and others. All these images are, however, of placid form. The fierce aspect of the Buddhist goddess like the fierce aspect of the Hiudu goddess was yet to emerge.

To come back to the Brahmanical counterpart of the Buddhist Tārā. The concept of the Brahmanical Devī, Durgā or Durgā-Tārā, as we may call her, being earlier than the concept of the Buddhist deity, it appears to our mind that, for the concept of their Mother-goddess, the Buddhists were indebted to their Hindu brethren. The recognition of the female principle in the Buddhist philosophy and its consequent iconic reprentation would be a point in that direction. A Buddhist goddess styled Parṇaśabarī, a comparatively late form of Tārā, is clearly reminiscent of the description of the Hindu Devī as 'a deity worshipped by the Śabaras, Barbaras or Pulindas' in the *Harivaṁśa*. Tārā thus appears to be a Buddhist version of the Hindu Devī, Durgā or Durgā-Tārā.

The above view is opposed to that of Hirananda Sastri and B. Bhattacharya, which seeks to trace the origin of Tārā in a Buddhist source. Laying undue emphasis on late Tantric works like the *Rudrayāmala* or *Brahmayāmala* and the comparatively late iconic representations of the goddess like Mahācīnatārā, they have attempted to show that 'the cult of Tārā must have been Buddhist in origin or, in other words, the Brahmanical mythology took it from the Buddhist pantheon' (*MASI*, XX, 12). By Brahmanical mythology, they referred to the tradition regarding the origin of the ten *Mahāvidyās*, among whom figures a Vidyā or goddess named Tārā. It is to be noted here that the mythology concerning the origin of the ten *Mahāvidyās* first comes to our notice in the *Mahābhāgavata Purāṇa* and by no means is it datable to a period earlier than the twelfth-thirteenth century. The *sādhana* of the Buddhist Mahācīnatārā, a fierce form of Tārā, belongs to the twelfth century A.D. and the Buddhist deity was Brahmanised only in the seventeenth century. Thus, on the basis of late evidence, Sastri and Bhattacharya seem to have made a wrong approach to the question of the origin of the cult of Tārā and, further, did lose sight of the fact that the essential concept underlying the Buddhist Tārā is almost exactly similar to that of the Brahmanical Durgā, the hoary antiquity of which is now an established fact.

Connected with the question of the origin of the Buddhist Tārā is the question of her original place of worship. Sastri adduced three evidences to prove her foreign origin. They are : First, a *sādhana* concerning Ekajaṭā, a late form of Tārā, refers to the fact that the deity concerned was revived in Bhoṭa or the country of Tibet by Nāgārjuna, the implication of this *sādhana* thus being that her worship once existing in Bhoṭa or Tibet was in abeyance till it was resuscitated by Nāgārjuna. Second, the well-known Buddha-Vasiṣṭha legend in the *Brahmayāmala* indicates that the goddess styled Mahācīnatārā came from outside (according to Bhattacharya from China, according to Sastri from the Tibetan borderlands) ; and third, a passage occurring in the text called *Svatantratantra* states that Tārā-Nīla-Sarasvatī was born in a great lake named Colana (or Colanā) on the western slope of the Meru, and the lake has been sought to be located by Sastri in the Ladakh region. Hence Sastri concludes that 'Tārā worship originated somewhere towards Ladakh' and that she came to India via Nepal.

Again, Sastri has based his conclusion on late evidences. First, Ekajaṭā and Mahācīnatārā are two late forms of Tārā and the latter goddess seems to have been an elaboration of Tārā of China or the Indo-Tibetan borderland. Second, the legend regarding the origin of Tārā as found in the *Svatantratantra* is a late one and again it is one of the several legends regarding the origin of the deity. Why is particular emphasis to be laid upon a particular story excluding the others? Third, the identification of the Meru and the location of the Colana lake as suggested by Sastri are disputable. Thus we have to look for the place of origin of Tārā worship in India.

A number of early representations of Tārā, either alone or in the company of her consort or accompanied by other Buddhist deities, have been found in the Buddhist caves of the Western Deccan. Being of placid appearance, presumably representing the *saumya* aspect like that of the Hindu Devī, they may be believed to have belonged to that phase of Buddhism which was uncontaminated by Tāntricism of a comparatively degenerate type. Exhibiting the *varada* (in some cases *abhaya*) *mudrā* in one hand and lotus in the other, these images are marked with simplicity and dignity. Among the Sirpur finds also images of Tārā, aesthetically similar to those of the Deccan caves, have been met with and some of them are early. There is nothing to show that artists responsible for all these iconic representations either themselves came from the Indo-Tibetan borderlands or consciously spared pains to illustrate a foreign deity at places much at a distance from the Indo-Tibetan borderlands. If any inspiration was necessary, they could have easily derived it from their Hindu brethren who were working in the neighbouring caves. Further, if the cases of Ekajaṭā and Mahācīnatārā are to be put forward for proving that the cult of Tārā originated outside, why is the case of Parṇaśabarī to be left out, especially when her characteristic feature is found in the Hindu Devī in the *Harivaṁśa*? Thus what appears to our mind is that the Buddhist Tārā originated in India (where exactly cannot be said in the present state of our knowledge) and for the concept of the deity the Buddhists were indebted to the Hindus.

At the same time it would be wrong to suppose that the Hindus were not in any way influenced by the Buddhists in the sphere of their goddesses. As noted already, the name Tārā was also applied to the Brahmanical Devī. The cases of the Buddhist Mahācīnatārā and the Hindu or Hindu-Tantric deity specifically designated as Tārā may be cited here. The *dhyānas* of these two deities are practically identical, and as the *dhyāna* of the Hindu Tārā is later than that of Mahācīnatārā, it stands to reason that the deity we find in the Hindu *Tantrasāra* is nothing but a Hindu version of the Buddhist goddess. Tantricism here again is found to have provided a common cultural background to the Buddhist and Hindu pantheons. Jāṅgulī, another form of the Buddhist Tārā, may also be believed to have given rise to the Hindu deity Manasā. In other words, though at the earlier stage the Buddhists derived inspiration for the concept of their Mother-goddess, in the later days the Hindus borrowed some of the goddesses from the Buddhist pantheon.

In connection with Tārā, we have passingly referred to some of her forms like Ekajaṭā, Mahācīnatārā, Jāṅgulī and others. On the basis of his study of the *Sādhanamālā*, an anthology of *sādhanas* pertaining to different Buddhist deities, and another important work named *Niṣpanna-yogāvalī*, B. Bhattacharya has made a list of 24 forms of Tārā. S. K. Saraswati has informed me that the published and unpublished texts may be found to enumerate nearly 100 varieties of Tārā. That there were at least 108 names of Tārā current among the Buddhists would be evident from the *stotra* styled *Āryatārābhaṭṭārikānāma-aṣṭottaraśatakastotra*. Evidently enough, all these names emphasize in one way or other several attributes of the goddess. The Hindu goddess, Durgā or for that matter Devī, is also known by a host of names emphasizing attributes connected with her benevolent and fierce aspects like Annapūrṇā, Jagaddhātrī, Kālī, Tārā, Ugratārā, etc. Iconically speaking, a distinction can be made between the different forms and names of the Buddhist Tārā and these iconic forms are nothing but the proliferations of the deity in question—the primordial Mother-goddess—which intend to represent her in different specific activities. Thus Parṇaśabarī protects her devotees from the epidemics and Jāṅgulī extracts the poison from her snake-bitten worshipper. The goddess with the distinctive epithet *Aṣṭamahābhaya*[1] evidently delivers her devotees from 'eight great terrors' like shipwreck, conflagration, enraged elephant, brigand, pouncing lion, serpent, captivity and demon. Many images of Tārā of the mediaeval period[2] have on their stela (*prabhāvalī*) representations of votaries threatened with these *mahābhayas* and eight miniature replicas of the goddess in the *varadamudrā* as well. According to the *sādhana*, the devotee should meditate on eight goddesses rescuing the afflicted devotees along with the principal deity.[3]

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[1] *Sādhanamālā*, ed. B. Bhattacharya, Vol. I, p. 207. The eight terrors have been enumerated by a certain Sarvajñamitra of about the 8th century in eight *ślokas* composed in praise of the goddess; see *Bauddhastotra saṁgrahaḥ*, Vol. I (Calcutta, 1908). While an 11th century Cālukyan inscription invokes the deity in her capacity as a saviouress from the perils of lion, elephant, fire, snake, thief, fetters, ocean and demon (see *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. X, p. 185), an inscription found at Nalanda of about the first half of the 12th century alludes to the construction of a temple of Tāriṇi (i.e. Tārā) at Somapura (modern Paharpur, Rajshahi Dist., East Pakistan) for dispelling entirely the Eight Great Terrors of the people (see *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXI, pp. 99f.).

[2] Sm. Debala Mitra has drawn our attention to a good example, among others, hailing from Ratnagiri, Cuttack District, now in the Patna Museum. She has published a photograph of this image with her article *Aṣṭamahābhaya Tārā* in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, Vol. XXIII, No. 1, 1957, pp. 19-22, Pl. I (A)

[3] *Aṣṭadevyantarāle ca bhāvayet Tārā-rūpiṇīm*—
Sādhanamālā, *loc. cit.*

The word Tārā is, therefore, a common epithet applied to both the Buddhist and Hindu Devīs. Because these deities are supposed to save their devotees for manifold dangers and calamities, literally 'enable them to cross the ocean of troubles', they are called as such.

Between the eighth and twelfth centuries, the Buddhist goddess earned tremendous popularity in the Buddhist world. Her worship was not confined only to India (including Nepal) but spread to other extra-Indian territories as well. The Nesari plates of Rāṣṭrakūṭa Govinda III while recording the latter's act of snatching away the royal banner of the Pāla monarch Dharmapāla suggests that his banner bore the effigy of Tārā. In other words, Dharmapāla considering Tārā to be a source of success, depicted her effigy on his banner. In Rāmapāla's time we hear of her being worshipped in the Jagaddala *vihāra* along with Lokeśa, presumably her consort Avalokiteśvara. A Javanese epigraph written in a North Indian script records the construction of a temple of Tārā (*Tārā-bhavana*) by the guru of the Śailendra family in Śaka 700, i.e. A.D. 778. The Indonesian countries have also yielded from time to time images of Tārā (Foucher, *Beginnings*, p. 267, Batavia Museum). Hiuen-tsang speaks of the worship of an image of Tārā 'of great height and endowed with deep penetration' by kings, ministers and powerful men in his country on the first day of each year. In Tibet, the cult of Tārā seems to have been in vogue in the seventh century and a tradition goes that the Nepalese and Chinese queens of Srong-tsan-sgam-po were regarded as incarnations of Tārā. The Tibetans, it is said, conceived of 21 forms of Tārā. The cult of Tārā spread also to Mongolia and Japan.[1] The Tibetans call the great goddess *Sgrol-ma* (*Döl-ma*) meaning 'saviouress' or 'deliveress' and the Mongolians describe her as *Dara-eke*, i.e. 'the Tārā mother. A plaque of about the ninth century A.D. containing a prayer to Tārā has been found in Ceylon, but in all likelihood it seems to have been brought from outside, for Ceylon and Burma are known to have been members of the Southern Buddhist school. The cult of Tārā thus found its way into the countries of Northern Buddhism.

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[1] In Japan there is, however, only one form of the goddess. She holds the lotus and may display the *varada* or *vitarka mudrā*, or have the hands folded.

A large number of sculptural and painted representations of Tārā have been discovered in India and outside. Iconographically, they are of numerous varieties. The different forms and names of Tārā have already been mentioned. For correct identification of these images we have to resort to the *Sādhanamālā*.

One of the important features of Buddhist iconography is the grouping of deities according to the five Dhyānī Buddhas, viz., Vairocana, Amoghasiddhi, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha and Akṣobhya, from whom they are said to have emanated. Each of these Dhyānī Buddhas has his own *mudrā* and colour. Images of emanating deities are generally found to have borne effigies of their respective partental Dhyānī Buddhas on their tiaras. They are also supposed to have the colours of their respective sires. Turning to the different varieties of Tārā, it is found that they have been assigned to altogether four Dhyānī Buddhas—Amoghasiddhi, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha and Akṣobhya. But, in actual representations, we find that the miniature effigy of the parental Dhyānī Buddha is sometimes absent. As to the colour, it may be pointed out that colour is naturally available only in painted representations. So we are to look into other means of identification such as the attending deities, cognizances, sitting postures, etc.

Tārā in her early and simple form is endowed with two hands and is generally found seated. While seated, she is normally in the *vajraparyaṅkāsana* (sometimes in the *lalitāsana*). Her right hand exhibits *varada* (rarely *abhaya* ; cf. the Ellora specimen), the left holding the stem of the lotus, either full-blown or close. Her garments and ornaments look like those of a Bodhisattva and her hair is abundant and wavy. Mediaeval images of Tārā are usually found standing.

In the course of time with the multiplication of the forms of the goddess, the number of her hands increased and variations appeared in respect of cognizances, sitting postures, etc. She was also attended by accessory figures, the number of which extended upto ten. Mediaeval sculptural representations of Tārā present normal features like the miniature effigies of respective parental Dhyānī Buddhas, which help us to identify such representations. The identification of accessory figures with the help of the *sādhanas* or the cognizances and sitting postures is also often resorted to. For instance, with the help of the *sādhana* we can identify an image as that of Vajratārā when it is found to be accompanied by 8 or 10 (generally 8) goddesses, evidently meant to be worshipped in a *maṇḍala*, and to bear such emblems as the *vajra*, arrow and conch-shell in the three right hands with the fourth right hand exhibiting the *varadamudrā* and blue lotus, bow and elephant goad in the three left hands with the fourth left hand exhibiting the *tarjanīmudrā*. In painted representations, colours applied to the body of the deity is of substantial help.

Here it is not possible to go into the details of the iconic representations of the different forms of Tārā. A careful study of the *Sādhanamālā*, *Niṣpannayogāvalī* and similar texts is a must for the correct identification of such forms. Now I propose to put certain problems relating to the cult of Tārā and her iconography in general and investigations in those directions with the help of published and unpublished works (the number of unpublished works still in manuscript, I understand, is considerable) is expected to yield some fruitful results.

First, though there seems to be little doubt that the concept of Tārā was originally borrowed by the Buddhists from the Brahmanical concept of the Devī, still to prove the contention a thorough study of early literary works is necessary.

Second, the place of original worship of the Buddhist Tārā is to be found out. Did the Buddhist Tārā originate in Central India or Western Deccan ? Or did it originate in Eastern India and eventually spread to different parts of India and outside ? The information regarding Dharmapāla's banner bearing the effigy of Tārā when judged in the context of the information regarding the construction of a temple of Tārā in Java by the Śailendrarājaguru who hailed from Gauḍa would show that the cult of Tārā migrated from Gauḍa to the Far Eastern Islands. If so, why have we not found images of Tārā of an early period in Eastern India ?

Third, there are certain exceptions with regard to the colours of some of the forms of Tārā. In other words, there are some forms of Tārā which do not have the colour of their sires. For instance, Kurukullā, a form of Tārā, endowed with two hands, is said to have white colour. This Kurukullā emanates from Amitābha and Amitābha's colour is known to have been red. Similarly, another form named Jāṅgulī, an emanation of Akṣobhya, may have white, yellow and green colours but not blue, the colour of Akṣobhya. Instances can be multiplied in this way. But we think that, if investigations are carried on, we may have more *sādhanas* removing such discrepancy in the colour scheme. The remark applies to other Buddhist deities as well.

Fourth, the *mudrās* and the way of holding emblems like lotuses by Tārā and other deities are not without significance. A study of unpublished texts, specially Tibetan, I believe, would bring out this significance and make the iconological interpretation of the images of the deities complete.

Fifth, there are some forms of Tārā whose known images belong to the medieaval period ; but a study of the *sādhanas* as well as a consideration of other evidences would show that the concepts underlying them are quite old. For instance, a *saṅgīti* in the *Sādhanamālā* describes Jāṅgulī as old as the Buddha himself. Is this statement a significant one ? May we hold that Jāṅgulī, originally a goddess of the tribal peoples, was icorporated in the ever-widening fold of Tārā owing to her alleged power of extracting poison from the body of a snake-bitten person and hence was significantly regarded as Tārā ? Similarly, may we regard Parṇaśabarī as a tribal goddess of antiquity who was likewise absorbed into the Buddhist fold for her alleged power of 'destroying all diseases and epidemics' ? Why has the epithet *piśācī* been attributed to her ? Is there any connection between the deity of similar character appearing in the *Harivaṁśa* and the Buddhist Parṇaśabarī ? Indeed, in order to have an idea of the development of the conception and iconic representation of the Buddhist Tārā in her different forms, a study of the goddesses worshipped among aboriginal and tribal peoples, to my mind, is expected to be really fruitful. In other words, an anthropological approach to the problems connected with the deity is deemed necessary. In short, the very complexity of the concept and iconic representation of Tārā requires many approaches—archaeological, literary and anthropological. All that is essential is that we shall approach the goddess from all possible angles, so that the goddess may justify her name Tārā by steering us clear through many doubts, suspicions and misconceptions !

II

The Tārā of Candradvīpa

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Of the many varieties of the image of the Buddhist goddess Tārā, which are emanations of the various Dhyāni-Buddhas, Khadiravanī-Tārā, an emanation of Amoghasiddhi, is the commonest.[1] She is also called Śyāmā-Tārā owing to her green colour and is represented as seated or standing, as holding a *nīlotpala* in her left hand and as usually accompanied by Aśokakāntā-Mārīcī and Ekajaṭā.

The representation of a deity of the same class in found in a manuscript of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* copied in Eastern India in the year 1015 A.D., which describes the goddess as *Candradvīpe Bhagavatī Tārā*, i.e. the goddess Tārā worshipped in Candradvīpa.[2] Tārā, installed in a temple of Candradvīpa was thus one of the most celebrated Buddhist deities in Bengal during the age of the Pālas. Among the images of the same deity worshipped in other areas of the Pāla empire, one of the most important is the Hilsa (Patna District, Bihar) statue bearing the Tantric formula *Oṁ Tāre Tuttāre Ture svāhā* and an inscription of the 35th regnal year of Devapāla (c. 810-50 A.D.).[3]

In the second quarter of the seventh century A.D., the celebrated Chinese pilgrim Hiuen-tsang speaks of a Mahāyāna Buddhist establishment at Tilāḍhaka in Magadha, wherein a temple of the Buddha was flanked by those of 'To-lo'-bodhisattva and Avalokiteśvara-bodhisattva.[4] Elsewhere he mentions 'To-lo'-bodhisattva as a popular object of worship installed in a brick temple at Nālandā.[5] Watters points out that, in both the cases, 'To-lo'-bodhisattva is referred to without any indication of sex and that this Bodhisattva became 'the Holy Mother Tārā, the spiritual wife of Kuan-yin (Avalokiteśvara)'.[6] She is said to be residing at the foot of a mountain in the Southern Ocean, *i.e.* the Indian Ocean or the Bay of Bengal. There may be reference here to Tārā's temple in Candradvīpa, literally 'the *dowāb* or island of Candra'.[7]

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[1] *History of Bengal*, Vol. I, ed. Majumdar, p. 472.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 22 ; Bhattasali, *Catalouge of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum*, p. 12.

[3] *JBORS*, Vol. X, pp. 31 ff.

In the 16th and 17th centuries, Candradvīpa was a small principality in the Buckergunge District, and it had its headquarters first at Kachuwā and then at Mādhavapāśā. It has been identified with the Pargana of Baglā or Bāklā in the Sarkār of the same name known from the 'Ain-i-Akbarī.[8] Tārā of Candradvīpa was thus worshipped in the Bāklā-Candradvīpa or Kachuwā-Mādhavapāśā area of the Buckergunge District. Some scholars are inclined to identify Candradvīpa of earlier records with modern Sandvip, an island (*dvīpa*) in the Bay of Bengal between the Buckergunge and Chittagong Districts.[9] There is, however, no support in favour of this suggestion excepting the similarity of the names, the word *dvīpa* being often used to indicate the *dwāb* or land between two rivers. The same meaning is noticed in the name of Bāklā-Candradvīp which is not an island.

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[4] Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, Vol. II, p. 105.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 171.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 107.

[7] If such was the case, the hill near the Tārā temple may be regarded as a big mound like the hillocks at Chittagong.

[8] Majumdar, *op.cit.*, p. 18.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 298, note 6.

The antiquity of the goddess Tārā of Candradvīpa is suggested by the fact that the celebrated Buddhist grammarian Candragomin, who is said to have settled in Candradvīpa and is called *Dvaipa* (an inhabitant of the Dvīpa, *i.e.* Candradvīpa), wrote his *stotra* of Tārā, entitled *Ārya-Tār-āntarbalividdhi*,[10] very probably inspired by the goddess of Candradvīpa. Candragomin is supposed by many scholars to have flourished in the Gupta age[11] in the 5th and 6th centuries, since he is believed to refer to the Gupta victory over the Hūṇas, which is to be ascribed to Skandagupta (455-67 A.D.) or to Bālāditya (sixth century).[12] As the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen-tsang noticed the prevalence of the Tārā cult in the first half of the 7th century A.D., the worship of the goddess seems to have been prevalent also in the 5th and 6th centuries, while Hirananda Sastri has tried to show that the goddess does not date further back than the 5th century A.D.[13] Tārā worshipped in a temple of Candradvīpa seems to be one of the earliest representations of the goddess. It also appears that Śyāmā or the green variety is one of the earliest forms of Tārā, Śyāmā as the name of the Mother-goddess being still very much popular in Bengal. It is, however, difficult to say whether Khadiravana, from which Khadiravanī-Tārā received her name, was a locality situated in ancient Candradvīpa.[14]

The recently discovered Nesari plates of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king Govinda III (794-814 A.D.) refer to the great veneration in which the goddess Tārā was held by the Pāla kings of Eastern India. The official records of the Pālas speak of their seal as the Dharmacakra-mudrā representing the Buddhist Wheel of Law flanked by a deer on either side, and the said seal was affixed to the top of the copper-plates on which their charters were engraved. But the Nesari plates show that the Pāla standard or banner bore the representation of *Bhagavatī* Tārā. As in the case of several other ruling families of early medieval India, the Pālas thus appear to have had two different emblems, viz. the Dharmacakra for their seal and the goddess Tārā for their standard or banner.[15]

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[10] *Ibid.*, p. 299, note 2.

[11] See *ibid.*, p. 297

[12] Cf. *loc.cit.*, note 6.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 299, note 2.

[14] It is a matter of investigation whether *Khadira* was grown in the Sundarbans or elsewhere in the Buckergunge District. Of course even a single *khadira* tree in a wood near about the Tārā temple would have justified the name,

It is stated in the Nesari plates that Govinda III defeated the contemporary rulers and snatched away their standards or banners : (1) the fish from the Pāṇḍya king, (2) the bull from the Pallava ruler, (2) the tiger from the Cola, (4) the elephant from the Gaṅga (Western Gaṅga), (5) the bow from the Kerala, (6-8) the boar from the Andhra (Eastern Cālukya), Cālukya and Maurya, (9) the board bearing the kettle-drum and serpent from the Gurjara king, (10-12) the name from the kings of Kosala, Avanti and Siṁhala, and (13) *Bhagavatī* Tārā from Dharma (Dharmapāla), the king of Vaṅgāla.

It will be seen that, excepting Dharmapāla, no other adversary of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king has been mentioned in the list by name and that, excepting the kings of the Kosala, Avanti and Siṁhala countries, who had their individual names on their banners, the reference is generally to dynastic emblems on the rulers' banners or standards, which were often the same as those on the seals of the royal families in question. Tārā of Dharmapāla's standard or banner was very probably the dynastic emblem of the Pālas for their standard or banner just as the Dharmacakra was for their seals.

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[15] *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXXIV, p. 137.

That Dharmapāla alone is mentioned by name in the whole list is no doubt due to his recognition as one of the most powerful monarchs of his time, while his mention merely as the lord of Vaṅgāla, which was originally a small part of Vaṅga, in spite of his suzerainty over much wider areas including Bengal and Bihar, indicates a sneering tone in the language of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa court poet whose purpose was to belittle his patron's strongest adversary.

In the 16th century, Abu'l Fazal regards Vaṅgāla as another name of Vaṅga, the derivation of which he explains by saying that the former rulers of Vaṅga raised huge mounds or embankments called *āl*, all over the area. Since such embankments are made even today to keep off sea-water from the corn-fields in coastal Bengal including the Buckergunge District, Abu'l Fazal's derivation of *Vaṅgāla* from *Vaṅga-āl* would suggest that Vaṅgāla was originally situated in the coastal areas of South Bengal.[16] This is probably supported by the fact that, while the inscriptions of the Candra dynasty represent the early Candra king Trailokyacandra as the ruler of Candradvīpa, the Tirumalai epigraph of Rājendra-coḷa speaks of the later Candra monarch Govindacandra as the king of the Vaṅgāla country exactly as Dharmapāla has been described in the Nesari plates of Govinda III.[17] Thus Candradvīpa would appear to be essentially identical with Vaṅgāla, although the conquest of East Bengal by the Candras of Candradvīpa or Vaṅgāla led to the application of the name Vaṅgāla to the whole of that area, while the emergence of Vikramapura in Vaṅga, also called Vaṅgāla since the days of the later

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[16] Sircar, *Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Medieval India*, p. 132.

[17] Cf. *Ep.Ind.*, Vol. XXXIV, pp. 139-40.

Candras, as the capital of the rulers of Bengal finally made Vaṅgāla, in the medieval period, the name of the entire Bengali-speaking region.[18]

With the representation of Dharmapāla in the Nesari plates as the king of Vaṅgāla, we have to compare the Tibetan tradition speaking of Dharmapāla's father Gopāla, the founder of the Pāla empire, as originally ruling in the Bhaṅgala or Vaṅgāla country.[19] This would appear to suggest that the Pālas began their career as the rulers of Vaṅgāla otherwise called Candradvīpa. Thus, probably, the great devotion of the Pāla kings to Tārā, the celebrated goddess of Candradvīpa, whose representation they adopted as the emblem of their standard or banner, is easily explained.

It may be mentioned here that the goddess Tārā appears to have been originally worshipped by some aboriginal people (probably of Eastern India) and was adopted in both the Brahmanical and Buddhist pantheons in the early centuries of the Christian era. Several goddesses, including a few Mongoloid ones, merged in Tārā in the course of time.

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[18] Cf. Sircar, *op.cit.*, p. 126.

[19] Majumdar, *op.cit.*, p. 184 ; cf. *IHQ*; Vol. XVI, pp. 227-35.

III

An Unkown Form of Tārā[1]

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Every student of Buddhist iconography is perhaps well aware that there was a profusion of gods and goddesses in the Buddhist pantheon, especially during the later phases of its development. It has not yet been possible for scholars to study the iconography of all these numerous gods and goddesses. From a study of the *Sādhanamālā*, the *Niṣpannayogāvalī* and several other Tantric Buddhist texts, together with that of the images of the Buddhist deities so far discovered, the iconography of quite a number of Buddhist gods and goddesses has been known to us. But the study of Buddhist iconography, as has already been done, is in no way exhaustive. There remains much to be done. There are many Buddhist gods and goddesses whose names, not to speak of their iconography, are not yet known to us. In this paper, I shall endeavour to draw the attention of the scholars to a Buddhist goddess whose name and iconography were so long unknown. This goddess is Mahāmāyāvijayavāhinī, a fierce aspect of the supreme goddess Tārā.

No study made so far of Buddhist iconography mentions the name of the above goddess. The *Sādhanamālā* and the *Niṣpannayogāvalī*, the two celebrated Tantric Buddhist texts containing the description of almost all the Tantric

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[1] The revised copy of the paper was received on the 25th June, 1965. —Ed.

Buddhist gods and goddesses, also do not know the name of Mahāmāyāvijayavāhinī. But the *Dhāraṇīsaṃgraha* and *Nārāyaṇaparipṛcchā*, two unpublished Tantric Buddhist works (manuscripts of which found from Nepal are now preserved in the library of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta)[2] not only mention this otherwise unknown goddess, but also give a very interesting account of her iconography.

In the *Dhāraṇīsaṃgraha*. we get the following description of the goddess : *Sahasramukhi sahasraśire sahasrabhuje jvalitanetre sarvatathāgatahṛdayagarbhe asidhanuparaśupaśupāśatomalakanayaśaktimusaramudgalacakrahaste ehyehi bhagavati sarvatathāgatasatyena devarṣisatyena Mahāmāyāvijayavāhini smara smara sarvatathāgatajñānarūpeṇāgaccha gaccha sarvāvaraṇakṣayaṃkari parasainyavidrāpaṇi mohaya sarvaduṣṭān......Vajradharavandite pūjite svāhā | Padmapāṇipriye svāhā | sarvadevanamaskṛte svāhā | mātṛgaṇavandite pūjite svāhā |*

The *Nārāyaṇaparipṛcchā* also contains an almost identical account of the goddess.[3] It is clear that both the accounts relate to Mahāmāyāvijayavāhinī, the Buddhist goddess of war. It is very interesting to note that the goddess Mahāmāyāvijayavāhinī is described here as venerable and worshipful not only to the gods and the divine mothers (*sarvadevanamaskṛte mātṛgaṇavandite pūjite svāhā*), but also to Vajradhara himself (*Vajradharvandite pūjite svāhā*) who is supposed to be the Ādi-Buddha or the originator of the five Dhyānī Buddhas, the progenitors of the five *kulas* or families of Buddhist gods and goddesses. Thus it seems that Mahāmāyāvijayavāhinī has been assigned here the supreme position in which the Buddhist goddess Tārā is always held. Mahāmāyāvijayavāhinī is given the epithet *Sarvāvaraṇakṣayaṃkarī*, and it is significant that, in the *Sādhanamālā*, Prasanna-Tārā is also referred to as *Sarvāvaraṇavināśinī*.[4] Moreover Mahāmāyāvijayavāhinī has been invoked in the *Dhāraṇīsaṃgraha* as *Padmapāṇipriyā*, i.e., the beloved of Padmapāṇi, evidently the celebrated Bodhisattva Padmapāṇi Avalokiteśvara. It is to be pointed out that the goddess Tārā is the spiritual consort and, as such, the beloved of Padmapāṇi Avalokiteśvara.[5] Thus there remains no doubt that Mahāmāyāvijayavāhinī is no other than the celebrated Buddhist goddess Tārā herself, manifested in a form unknown so long to the scholars on Buddhist iconography.

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[2] *Dhāraṇīsaṃgraha*, Ms. No. B. 65 ; *Nārāyaṇaparipṛcchā*, Ms. No. G. 9985.

[3] Ms. No. G. 9985, fol. 3A ff. See *A Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Government Collection under the Care of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. I, by H. P. Sastri, p. 17. It should however be mentioned that the goddess is described here as possessing thousand (*sahasra*) heads and thousand arms (*sahasrabhuja*). This seems to be peculiar, because thousand-headed icons should have usually two thousand hands. Thus it seems that the word *sahasra* used here and elsewhere in connection with the description of the goddess, has no numerical significance ; it is merely expressive of multitude.

But, as the *Dhāraṇīsaṃgraha* and the *Nārāyaṇaparipṛcchā* describe the goddess Mahāmāyāvijayavāhinī as having thousand heads and arms and as the goddess Tārā is not described in the published texts as possessing thousand heads and arms, some doubt may be entertained regarding the identity of Mahāmāyāvijayavāhinī with a form of Tārā. But it is very interesting to note that the *Āryatārāṣṭottaraśatanāma*, an unpublished Nepalese Buddhist work (manuscript now in the library of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta), describes the goddess Tārā as possessing thousand hands and thousand eyes (*sahasrabhuje sahasranetre*).[6] A similar description of the goddess is also found in the *Tārābhaṭṭārikānāmastotraśata* section of the manuscript of the *Dhāraṇīsaṃgraha*,[7] referred to above.

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[4] Sādhana No. 114 in the *Sādhanamālā*, Vol. I (Gaekwad's Oriental Series, XXVI), ed. B. Bhattacharya.

[5] 'The Indian Buddhist Cult of Avalokita and his consort Tārā, the Saviouress, illustrated from the remains in Magadha' by L. A. Waddell (*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1894, p. 54) ; *The Gods of Northern Buddhism* by Alice Getty, Tuttle edition, 1962, p. 118.

Thus it seems that the Buddhist goddess Tārā has also a thousand-handed iconic form which did not so long receive the proper attention of scholars. As a matter of fact, the goddess Mahāmāyāvijayavāhinī, known from the manuscripts of the *Dhāraṇīsaṃgraha* and the *Nārāyaṇaparipṛcchā*, can well be regarded as a form of the goddess Tārā.

In this connection reference should be made to the interesting similarities which seem to exist between the Brahmanical concept of Caṇḍī or Devī and the Buddhist concept of Tārā in general and the Mahāmāyāvijayavāhinī aspect of Tārā in particular. In the Devīmāhātmya section of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, we find that the presiding deity of the *Prathamacarita* or the first part dealing with the killing of the demons Madhu and Kaiṭabha is Mahākālī, the presiding deity of the *Madhyamacarita* or the middle part (or second part) describing the killing of Mahiṣāsura (buffallo-demon) is Mahālakṣmī, and the presiding deity of the *Uttaracarita* or the last part concerned with the killing of the demons Śumbha and Niśumbha is Mahāsaravatī. It is very interesting that the Buddhist goddess Tārā has also these three principal aspects known generally as Ugratārā or Mahācīnakramatārā, Vasudhārā and Prajñāpāramitā respectively. Ugratārā or Mahācīnakramatārā corresponds to the Makākālī aspect, Vasudhārā to the Mahālakṣmī aspect, and Prajñāpāramitā to the Mahāsarasvatī aspect.

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[6] Ms. No. B. 33, fol. 3B.

[7] Ms. No. B. 65, fol. 8A.

It is also to be pointed out in this connection that in the *Āryatārāṣṭottarśatanāma* and the *Tārābhaṭṭārikānāmastotraśata* section of the *Dhāraṇīsaṃgraha*, the Buddhist goddess Tārā is given the names Mahāmāyā, Jayā, Vijayā, Viśālarātri, etc., and it is significant that all these names are also used with reference to the Devī or Caṇḍī in various contexts in the Devīmāhātmya section of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa.*[8]

In the Devīmāhātmya section of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, we have the following passage :[9]

araṇye prāntare vāpi dāvāgniparivāritaḥ |
dasyubhirvā vṛtaḥ śūnye gṛhīto vāpi śatrubhiḥ ||
siṃhavyāghrānuyāto vā vane vā vanahastibhiḥ |
rājñā kruddhena vājñapto vadhyo gandhagato'pi vā ||
āghūrṇito vā vātena sthitaḥ pote mahārṇave |
patatsu vāpi śastreṣu saṁgrāme bhṛśadāruṇe ||
sarvavādhāsu ghorāsu vedanābhyardito'pi vā |
smaraṇmamaitaccaritaṃ naro mucyeta saṅkaṭāt ||

The above passage characterises the Devī as the great saviour who, being prayed to, delivers, men from such perils as captivity, wilderness, harassment by robbers, great forests, fire, cyclone, wild animals like tiger, lion, elephant, etc. It is very interesting to note that the Buddhist goddess Tārā is also assigned this characteristic in her *Aṣṭamahābhaya* aspect, as has been pointed out by J. N. Banerjea.[10] In an interesting article published the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*,[11] Mrs. Debala Mitra points out that, in her *Aṣṭamahābhaya* aspect, the goddess Tārā is invoked specially for the deliverance from the Eight Great Perils

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[8] See *Śrīśrī-Caṇḍī*, ed. Subodh Chandra Majumdar, published in 1962.

[9] *Uttaracarita*, XII. 26-29.

[10] *The Development of Hindu Iconography*, 2nd ed., p. 492.

[11] *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1957, Vol. I.

(*mahābhayas*) like shipwreck, conflagaration, enraged elephant, brigand, pouncing lion, serpent, prison and demon, as has been enumerated in the *Sragdharāstotra* composed in her praise by Sarvajñamitra (*c.* 8th century A.D.).

The last couplet of the *Nārāyaṇīstuti* (Ch. 91) of the Devīmāhātmya section of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* is as follows—

itthaṃ yadā yadā bādhā dānavotthā bhaviṣyati |
tadā tadāvatīryāhaṃ kariṣyāmyarisaṃkṣayam ||

It means that the goddess will as often incarnate herself and kill the enemies of the gods as the Dānavas will cause obstacles and distress to them. J. N. Banerjea rightly observes that the above mentioned couplet 'distinctly reminds us of the ideology behind the divine incarnation (*avatāravāda*) explained in the first few verses of the fourth chapter of the *Bhagavadgītā*'.[12] It is very interesting to note that the Buddhists also assigned to the goddess Tārā almost a similar concept as is evident from the following passage occurring both in the *Āryatārāṣṭottaraśatanāma* and the *Tārābhaṭṭārikānāmastotraśata* section of the *Dhāraṇīsaṁgraha* :[13]

kampayanti eṣo lokān trāsayan yakṣarākṣasāt |
nīlotpalakarā devī mābhairmābhairiti brūban ||
jagatsaṃrakṣaṇārthāya ahamutpādito janaiḥ |
tārayiṣyāmyahaṃ sattvānnānābhayamahārṇavāt |
tena Tāreti māṃ loke gāyanti munipuṅgavāḥ ||

This shows that the goddess Tārā also appears as the saviour of the world whenever the people are in distress caused by the Yakṣas and Rākṣasas.

The Mahāmāyāvijayavāhinī aspect of the goddess Tārā already referred to also shows some very interesting similarities with the various characteristics of the Devī or Caṇḍī of the Brahmanists. The Devīmāhātmya section of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* charecterises the Devī essentially as a war-goddess and represents her as fighting with and destroying the enemies of the gods who invoked the goddess with befitting prayers (*evameva tvayā kāryamasmadvairivināśanam*).[14] In her Mahāmāyāvijayavāhinī aspect, the goddess Tārā has also been conceived likewise as a war-goddess destroying the forces of the enemies (*parasainyavidrāpaṇī*),[15] evidently the enemies of her votaries. The goddess Caṇḍī in her Kālī aspect is described as devouring the forces of the Asuras (*surārīṇām abhakṣayata tadbalam*),[16] and in her Cāmuṇḍā form also she is described as such (*mukhe samudgato yo'syā raktapātānmahāsuraḥ / tāṃśca khādatha Cāmuṇḍā papan tasya ca śoṇitam*).[17] It is very interesting to note that the Mahāmāyāvijayavāhinī aspect of the Buddhist goddess Tārā is also described likewise as devouring the forces of the enemies (*parasainyagrasantamiva cintayet*),[18] evidently those of her votaries.

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[12] Banerjea, *op.cit.*, p. 493.
[13] Fol. 7A-7B.

It has already been shown that the goddess Tārā, especially in her Mahāmāyāvijayavāhinī aspect, assumes thousand heads and thousand arms. It is interesting that the Devīmāhātmya section of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* also characterises the Devī as possessing thousand arms (*diśo bhujo bhujasahasreṇa samantādvyāpya saṃsthitām*).[19] The following passage of the *Devībhāgavata*[20] also describes the Devī as possessing thousand heads, thousand arms and thousand eyes :

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[14] *Uttaracarita*, XI. 39.

[15] Ms. B. 65, fol. 131B ; Ms. G. 9985, fol. 3A.

[16] *Uttaracarita*, VII. 9.

[17] *Ibid.*, VIII. 60.

[18] Ms. B. 65, fol. 132 B.

[19] *Prathamacarita*, II. 39.

[20] Tṛtīya Skandha, III. 48.

> *sahasranayanā rāmā sahasrakarasaṃyutā /*
> *sahasravadanā ramyā bhāti dūrādasaṃśayam //*

In the context of the description of the *Virāṭarūpa*, i.e., the great form of the Devī, the *Devīgītā*[21] also gives almost an identical description of the Devī. It should however be mentioned in this connection that the *Vaikṛtikarahasya* section of the *Caṇḍī* clearly states that the Devī should be worshipped in her eighteen-handed form, inspite of her having thousand hands (*aṣṭādaśabhujā pūjyā sā sahasrabhujā satī*).[22] In some other contexts, in the Caṇḍī and in other texts, we also find the description of several other forms of the Devī with hands numbering even less than eighteen. Thus it seems that the Brahmanists conceived one *Virāṭarūpa* and several *Laukikarūpas* or popular forms of the Devī. It is significant that the Buddhists also conceived a *Virāṭarūpa* of the goddess Tārā with thousand heads and thousand arms, as manifested in her Mahāmāyā-vijayavāhinī aspect, and several other *Laukika* or popular forms of the goddess with variations in the number of her heads and arms.[23]

Instances of the similarities existing between the Brahmanical concept of the Devī and the Buddhist concept cf the goddess Tārā can however be multiplied. But what has already been said above will probably prove that much of the inspiration for the conception of the Buddhist goddess Tārā, especially the conception of her Mahāmāyāvijayavāhinī aspect, was derived from the Brahmanical concept of the Devī, especially her concept as delineated in the Devīmāhātmya section of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*. Like the Devī in the last-mentioned text, the Buddhist goddess Tārā also assumes different names and iconic forms for the manifestation of her various divine aspects. In one of her great iconic forms with thousand heads and arms, she is known as Mahāmāyāvijayavāhinī.

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[21] *Devīgītā*, Chapter III.

[22] *Śrīśrī-Caṇḍī*, ed. Subodh Chandra Majumdar, p. 435 ; *Vaikṛtika-rahasya*, verse 10.

[23] For the various forms of the goddess Tārā with variations in the number of her hands, see *The Indian Buddhist Iconography* by B. Bhattacharya.

Regarding the representation in art of this form of the goddess Tārā, it is to be mentioned that this image type of the goddess, though very rare, is not totally unknown. Alice Getty informs us that "in the collection of Tibetan temple pictures belonging to M. Bacot, there is a painting of Tārā with 'one thousand heads and arms'. The heads are arranged in two rows either side of the central row, superposed one above the other *ad infinitum*, and the five rows are painted green, red, white, yellow, and blue. She is represented standing."[24] Gordon also describes and illustrates a standing image of Uṣṇīṣasitātapatrāparājitā, a form of Tārā, with 'a thousand heads and thousand arms'.[25] Both these images have however been found from Tibet. But as the Nepalese Buddhist manuscripts referred to above describe this magnificient iconic form of the goddess Tārā and as Tibetan Buddhist iconography is mainly derived from Nepal, it is quite likely that this iconic form of the goddess Tārā was also prevalent in Nepal and other places of Eastern India.

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[24] Alice Getty, *The Gods of Northern Buddhism*, Tuttle ed., 1962, p. 121.

[25] A. K. Gordon, *Tibetan Religious Art*, p. 62, also Plate facing p. 65 ; *Iconography of Tibetan Lamaism* by the same authoress, p. 75, Plate 76b. In the book entitled *Buddhist Himalaya* by D. L. Snellgrove, Oxford, 1957, mention is made of a form of Tārā with thousand hands and thousand eyes (see p. 116). This form is referred to there as the 'triumphant' form of the goddess. This seems to be significant, because the form of Tārā that we have dealt with in this article is also described in the texts as triumphant or victorious (*vijayavāhinī*).

IV

Chinese Origin of the Cult of Tārā

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Tāntricism originates from agricultural magic. The primitive belief in the identical relation between the fruit-bearing soil and the child-bearing woman is responsible for sexual rites intended to promote the fertility of the fields. By imitating the sexual act, the primitive peoples, all over the ancient world, wanted to increase the generative power of nature.[1] There are traces of Tāntric rituals in the material remains of Harappa and Mohenjodaro.[2] With the development of agriculture among the Vedic Aryans, they were acquainted with agricultural magic and sex rites through their contact with the non-Aryan neighbours. Thus in the later Saṃhitās and Brāhmaṇas as well as in the Upaniṣads, we come accross sex rites associated with agriculture.[3] This stream of Tāntric thought did not cease to exist in subsequent ages.[4]

Now-a-days, it is believed that some later Taoist ideas and practices, especially the *Vāmācāra* rites, came to India from China. As early as 1900, H. P. Sastri suggested the Mahāyāna Buddhist origin of some Brāhmanical gods and goddesses and pointed out from Sanskrit texts the connexion of the goddess Tārā with Tibet and China.[5] Sylvain Lévi also agrees, on the authority of the *Tārātantra* and other Sanskrit works, that the worship of Tārā and the Tāntric *Vāmācāra* practices came from China.[6] P. C. Bagchi insists on the Chinese, and particularly the Tibetan, influences on some of the important cults and practices of both the Buddhist and Brāhmaṇical Tantras.[7] On the basis of the *Tārārahasya*, *Rudrayāmala*, *Mahācīnācārakrama* and *Merutantra*, it has been suggested that the *Vāmācāra* practices are connected with the worship of the goddess Tārā, and these practices were brought from China by the sage Vasiṣṭha who was instructed by the Buddha himself.[8] Sastri quotes a significant stanza from the *Kubjikā Tantra* : "Go to India and establish yourself in the whole country and make manifold creations in the sacred places of primary and secondary importance."[9] K. H. Van Gulik in an essay on Chinese sex life has drawn our attention to certain aspects of Buddhist Tāntricism and Brāhmaṇical Śāktism.[10] Further light on this *Cīnācāra* has been thrown by Joseph Needham whose final conclusion is that, though Tāntricism, at the first sight, seems to have been an Indian importation to China, yet, a closer inspection leads to the conclusion that the whole thing was really Taoist." Reference should also be made to Woodroffe's view on Cīnācāra, though he holds an entirely different opinion.[12]

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[1] Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (abridged ed.), pp. 135ff.

[2] Kosambi, *An Introduction to the Study of Indian History*, p. 54; Banerjea, *Development of Hindu Iconography*, p. 171; *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. VII, pp. 1-52; Vol. VIII, pp. 1-32.

[3] *Vāj. Saṃ.*, XXIII. 22-31; *Śat. Br.*, I. 9. 2. 11; II. 44. 21; II. 5. 1. 11; V. 1. 3. 9; VI. 3. 1. 28; VII. 5. 1. 6; *Bṛ. Up.*, VI. 4. 3-7; *Ch. Up.*, II. 13. 1-2; etc.

[4] For the antiquity and history of Tāntricism, see Chakravarty in *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. VI, pp. 114ff.

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[5] *Notices of the Sans. Mss.*, Second Series, Vol. I, pref.

[6] *Le Népal*, Vol. I, pp. 346f.

[7] *Studies in the Tantras*, pp. 46-55.

[8] B. Bhattacharya, *Buddhist Esoterism*, pp. 155-56 ; Sastri in N. N. Vasu's *Modern Buddhism*, p. 12 ; Chanda, *Indo-Aryan Races*, pp. 141-42 ; Bagchi, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-46.

[9] *Cat. Palm-leaf Mss. in the Darbar Library*, 1906, p. lxxix.

[10] A note on this work has been published by H. Goetz in *ABORI*, Vol. XXXVI, Parts i-ii, pp. 133-40. *The Original Erotic Colour Prints of the Ming period*, etc., is now a rare book, as S. K. Chatterji informs us.

[11] *Science and Civilization in China*, Vol. II, pp. 425ff.

Interchange of ideas between Taoism and Tāntricism might have occurred at their advanced stages ; but at the initial stage both Taoism and Tāntricism developed independently. The question of import or export does not arise since we cannot think that the American Musqakis borrowed their sex rites from the Indian Santals or *vice versa*. In fact, erotic practices associated with the Devī cult appear to be older than the Tāntric texts themselves. Sexual intercourse, employed as a means to stimulate the generative powers of nature, has its relation with the puissant and eternally active Śakti, the great mother representing the forces of life in nature. We find a considerable degree of unity among men in respect of such primitive beliefs. We are not therefore inclined to attach much importance to the question of the Chinese origin of *Vāmācāra* and the Tārā cult. Thomson's researches in the Egyptian and Mesopotamian cosmogonic myths led him to conclude that "it still moves within the forms of primitive thought, the evolution of the world being expressed in terms of sexual reproduction".[13] According to the Polynesian cosmogonic myth, the creation of the universe took place as a result of sexual intercourse between O-te-papa, the female principle, and Tangaloa, the male.[14] A similar belief persists in China. According to the Taoist creation legend, the universe is created out of the sexual union between Yang, the male principle, and Yin, the female.[15] These common creation legends developed independently of each other, and the uniformity of human mind led to the rise of similar customs in countries widely separated from one another geographically.

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[12] *Shakti and Shākta*, pp. 104ff.

[13] *First Philosophers*, p. 154.

[14] *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. IV, p. 175.

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[15] *Ibid.*, p. 140.

V

Trailokyavijayā[1]

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Prof. D. C. Sircar first noticed the name of the deity Trailokyavijayā in the Chandil stone inscription which was edited by himself.[2] The inscribed stone slab was originally the lintel in the doorway of an old shrine, evidently of Trailokyavijayā. The inscription, written in Sanskrit, is full of grammatical and orthographical errors.[2] It gives neither any indication to the pantheon to which the deity belongs nor any information regarding the religious belief of the donor. No image of Trailokyavijayā has been found up till now. Even the name does not occur in the lists of traditional Hindu or Buddhist deities.

The encyclopaedic *Agni Purāṇa*, however, in its Yuddhajayārṇava section (Chapters 124-28), gives a description of Trailokyavijayā.[3] There the goddess is conceived as conferring victory on her devotee over the enemy's army in the battle field. The Purāṇa attributes all sorts of awe-inspiring traits to this dreadful goddess. She is twenty-armed, blue-coloured, three-eyed and furious-looking with a huge ematiated form as dark as the cloud, a frowning face, red eyes and fierce mouth with terrible teeth. She wears a wet skin and a garland of dead bodies and holds thunderbolt and sword. Her body is besmeared with fat ; snakes are her ornaments and a dead body is her seat. She is the embodiment of wrath and is the mother of the primary elements.[4]

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[1] The paper was received on the 23rd June, 1965—Ed.

[2] *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXXIII, pp. 297-98.

[3] Ed. R. L. Mitra, Calcutta, 1873, Chap. 134 : *Oṁ namo bhagavati daṃṣṭriṇi bhīmavaktre mahograrūpe raktanetre mahānisvane vidyujjihve nirmāṃse gonasābharaṇe śavamālādhāriṇi mahāraudri sārdracarmakṛtāmbare asilatādhāriṇi bhṛkutikṛtāpāṅge viṣamanetrakṛtānane vasāmedoviliptagātre nīlajīmūtavarṇe raudrarūpe vajriṇi krodharūpiṇi bhīmabhīṣaṇe mahākāye mahābhūtamātaḥ sarvaduṣṭanivāriṇi Trailokyavijaye svāhā / nīlavarṇāṃ preta-saṃsthāṃ viṃśahastāṃ yajejjaye / saṅgrāme sainyabhaṅgaḥ syāt Trailokyavijayā-pāṭhāt / / oṁ sarva-śatrūn drāvaya oṁ Brahmāṇam ākarṣaya Viṣṇum ākarṣaya oṁ Maheśvaram ākarṣaya om Indraṃ ṭālaya oṁ parvatān cālaya oṁ ṣapta-sāgarān śosaya........*

The above description in the Purāṇa, apparently contains nothing particular on the basis of which Trailokyavijayā may be assigned to a particular pantheon. No associate deity is mentioned. The occurrence of the description of the goddess in the *Agni Purāṇa* does not necessarily imply that she originally belongs to the Hindu pantheon. It may simply be a case of borrowing.

In the *mantras* of invocation to the goddess, there are such expressions as "Drive the enemies away, drag Brahman, drag Viṣṇu, drag Maheśvara, shake Indra, shake the mountains", etc. These expressions are obviously intended to establish the supreme power of the goddess, and seem to indicate, though tacitly, an attempt to humiliate the Hindu deities, as their names are mentioned along with the enemy in the same vein. Trailokyavijayā thus appears to be a goddess of Buddhist extraction.

There is in the *Sādhanamālā* a *sādhana* of one dreadful Buddhist god Trailokyavijaya[5] and Trailokyavijayā perhaps was originally conceived as his *śakti*, as suggested by Prof. D. C. Sircar. The conception of Trailokyavijayā is more markedly 'associated with the Buddhist attempt to humiliate the Hindu deities Śiva and Pārvatī'.[6] This blue-coloured, four-faced and eight-armed Buddhist god is represented in the *sādhana* as standing in a *pratyālīḍha* posture (i.e. with the left foot advanced and the right foot drawn back) and trampling on the head of Śiva and the breasts of Gaurī under his left and right foot repectively. He holds the bell and thunderbolt in his principal hands exhibiting the *vajrahuṁkāra-mudrā* (i.e. with the wrists crossing at the breast), carries in three other right hands the *khaṭvāṅga* (a staff with a skull at the top), goad and arrows, and in the three other left hands the bow, noose and thunderbolt. It is evident that there is a close similarity of iconographic features between Trailokyavijaya and Trailokyavijayā. The anti-Hindu traits of the latter, however, are not as marked as that of the former. This may be due to the transformation of Trailokyavijayā from her Buddhist original to a Hindu Purānic deity.

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[4] There are two epithets, *aruṇavarṇā* and *ghaṇṭāravāvakirṇadehā* which are of doubtful import. The first does not suit the context as the deity has been unequivocally described as blue-coloured. The second perhaps indicates that the deity holds a bell in one hand at her breast forming half of the *vajrahuṅkāramudrā*. Cf. the same *mudrā* of Trailokyavijaya.

[5] Vol II, p. 511, Sādhana No. 262.

The traditional Buddhist pantheon, we know, is divided into five *kulas* (families) with the five Dhyānī (Divine) Buddhas as their progenitors. Each Divine Buddha is conceived as associated with a particular Divine Buddha-śakti, Divine Bodhisattva, Bīja-mantra and colour. Akṣobhya is regarded as the progenitor of the Dveṣa family, the colour of this family being blue. Most of the awe-inspiring Buddhist gods and goddesses like Heruka, Saṁvara, Vajraḍāka, Yamāri, Ekajaṭā, Mahācīna-tārā are included in this family.[7] Trailokyavijaya and Trailokyavijayā, as it appears from their traits and colour, belong to this Dveṣa-kula, though it is not mentioned anywhere. Akṣobhya, the Divine Buddha of this *kula* is intimately related to Tārā and a small image of the former is very often found in the head-dress of the latter. In the Hindu Tantras also, Tārā is described as *Akṣobhya-kṛta-śekharā.* The Divine Buddha-śakti of Akṣobhya is Locanā and this is also a name of Tārā. The main female deity of the Dveṣa-kula is Ekajaṭā whose worship is said to be introduced by Nāgārjuna from Tibet.[8] The *Tantrasāra* informs us that according to the *Bhairava Tantra,* Ekajaṭā is the *Prakṛti* of Mahānīla-sarasvatī and Ugratārā and all are different forms of Tārā (*Tārā-bhedāḥ*).[9] Thus Tārā is regarded as the main female deity of the Dveṣa-kula and, in a sense, of the entire Buddhist pantheon. Other female deities of this *kula* are regarded as forms of Tārā. As a goddess of the Dveṣa-kula, Trailokyavijayā perhaps was conceived to be a form of Tārā and as the Śakti of Trailokyavijaya originally. Subsequently, her worship was incorporated in the *Agni Purāṇa.*

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[6] D. C. Sircar in *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXIII, p. 298; B. Bhattacharya, *An Introduction to Buddhist Esoterism*, Chap. XII.

[7] B. Bhattacharya, *An Introduction to Buddhist Esoterism*, pp. 130-33.

There has been a long-standing controversy regarding the date and authenticity of the present *Agni Purāṇa.* But it is generally held that the Purāṇa was compiled between 700 and 1000 A.D. Some portions (mainly the Smṛiti and Alaṅkāra portions) of it are assigned to the 9th century A.D.[10] The Chandil stone inscription bearing the name of Trailokavijayā, also 'may be assigned to a date in the eighth or ninth century A.D. on palæographical grounds,' according to D. C. Sircar. This is the period of fusion of Buddhism and Hinduism, which began earlier. The

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[8] *Ibid.*, p. 134.

[9] *Tantrasāra*, Vasumati ed., p. 329.

[10] S. K. De, *History of Sanskrit Poetics*, p. 99 ; P. V. Kane, *History of Sanskrit Poetics*, pp. 4-6 ; R. C. Hazra, *IHQ*, Vol. XII, pp. 683-91 ; *Our Heritage*, Vol I, Pt. ii, and Vol. II, Pt. i. Hazra (*Studies in the Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, p. 138) suggests that the *Agni Purāṇa* was compiled in the 9th century.

Buddhist masses were gradually absorbed in the Brahmanical society.[11] In the process of this fusion, many Buddhist deities were also absorbed in the Hindu patheon. Trailokyavijayā thus appears to have found a way into the *Agni Purāṇa* which was also compiled in this period. In conclusion, it may be added that neither Trailokyavijaya nor Trailokyavijayā seems to have enjoyed a wide popularity. We get only one *sādhana* of the former and the latter is taken into account only in the *Agni Purāṇa.* The Chandil stone inscription is the solitary epigraphical record that has come down to us and bears the name of the goddess Trailokyavijayā.

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[11] D. C. Sircar in *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXXIII, p. 298.

VI

Tārā as a Serpent Deity and its Jain Counterpart Padmāvatī[1]

A. K. Bhattacharya, Indian Museum, Calcutta

European researches on the symbolism of the serpent resulted in connecting it with the Sun, Time or Eternity. From its connection with the sun-spirit, it came to signify enlightenment and creation. But while there is general agreement in accepting the order in the symbolic objects adored by man, as given by Forling in his *Rivers of Life*, wherein the serpent comes the third, the Tree and the Phallus preceding in order, there is reason to doubt the theory that 'gods and men transformed themselves into trees, plants or beasts'.[2] It is rather that the process was quite the reverse and the ancient thinkers found in the quick movement, spiritedness, etc., e.g., in the serpent, a reflection of the dynamicity of human life, its ideas of growth and expansion. Sebsequently, human thought tried to assimilate such objects, sensate or insensate, as were met with readily and could attract their attention as the embodiment and source of life and its essence.

The tradition of serpent-worship in India is very old being traceable in the *Atharvaveda*, nay, even in some obscure passages of the *Ṛgveda* itself.[3] The word *sarpa* occurs only once in the *Ṛgveda* and that also in the late tenth *maṇḍala.*[4] Although there is much doubt as to the meaning of the term, the word *ahi* meaning 'a serpent' is comparatively more frequent in certain portions of the text. The most conspicuous feature of this tradition is that the earliest reference to the serpent in the *Ṛgveda* is in the form of the enemy of Indra. *Ahi* or *Ahi budhnya* of the *Ṛgveda* is but another, and perhaps milder, form of the great enemy of Indra, *viz.*, Vṛtra, the serpent. This demoniac feature of the serpent was later, in the Brāhmaṇas[5] and the Sūtras, metamorphosed into the semi-divine character attributed to it when it is classed with Gandharva, etc. It is here also that we meet with the term *Nāga* for the first time, attended with anthropomorphic features. It is also noteworthy that, both in the Saṁhitās and in the Sūtras, it is the virile male energy that is embodied in the enemy of Indra, called Ahi. The transformation of the masculine personality into the feminine was the achievement of the epic writers with whom the serpent was the embodiment of the principle of creation and preservation. It is perhaps because of this

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[1] The paper was received on the 18th August 1965.—Ed.

[2] C. S. Wake, *Serpent Worship*, p. 6.

[3] *Ṛgveda*, X. 189. 1-3—
āyaṁ gauḥ pṛṣṇirakramīdasadanmātaraṁ puraḥ pitaraṁ ca prayantsvaḥ, etc. ; cf. Sāyaṇa on the above *sūkta* : *ayaṁ gauriti tṛcāmaṣṭātriṁśat sūktaṁ gāyatraṁ sarparājñī nāma ṛṣikā saiva devatā sūryo veti tathā*

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cānukrāntam ayaṁ gauḥ sarparājñyātmadaivataṁ sauryaṁ veti......yadā tvidaṁ sūktaṁ sarparājñyā ātmastutiḥ tadā sūryātmanā stūyata ityavagantavyam.

The term *Sarparājñī* has no direct connection with the snakes and, according to Sāyaṇa, *Sarparājñī* was to be identified with the Earth-goddess or the Sun-god. Mahidhara, another commentator, however, goes so far as to suggest that she was none else than Kadrū, the serpent-mother in the form of the earth. Cf. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, II, pp. 28-29. See also N. K. Bhattasali, *Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum*, pp. 212 ff.

[4] *RV*, X. 16. 6.

[5] The higher creation is divided into the following classes : gods, men, Gandharvas, Apsarases, Sarpas and Manes. Cf. *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, III. 31.5,

that the tradition in its later phase centres round the worship of a female deity as the serpent-goddess. The name *Sarpa* in the masculine finds mention in some verses in the *Vājasaneyasaṁhitā* of the *White Yajurveda* wherein, according to the commentator Mahīdhara, it means just a heavenly or a terrestrial or even an atmospheric 'abode'.[6]

In the epic age which came after a big gap following the Vedic and extending over several centuries, this tradition and the cult assumed a shape which pervaded the entire mythological setting of the Āryāvarta of that time. The snake-sacrifice of Janamejaya is a major episode in the drama of the entire heroic poetry that had grown up round the Kuru-battle. Although we have in Vāsuki the king of the serpents, we see in his sister, Jaratkāru, the serpent-goddess in the making. Vāsuki's sister Jaratkāru, wife of the sage of the same name, was the mother of Āstīka and this latter conception was responsible for the important position she came to occupy in the Hindu mythology as the presiding deity over the serpent-spirits. But the person that actually had been endowed with the power of curing snake-bites was Kaśyapa. It is, again, Kadrū that is associated with the serpents as their mother. It seems, therefore, that the mythological ideologies, as current in the epics, developed in a modified form in later ages and emerged in the Purāṇas in a new light. Thus the female serpent goddess Manasā, as we find in the *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa* the earliest Puraṇa to mention her, is ideologically a combination of the above personal features.[7] While

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[6] *Wh. YV*, 13. 6-8—*namo'stu sarpebhyo ye ke ca pṛthivimanu ye antarikṣe ye divi tebhyaḥ sarpebhyo namaḥ*, etc. On the above, Mahīdhara says, *ime vai lokāḥ sarpāḥ iti śruteḥ sarpaśabdena lokā ucyante*.

[7] The *dhyāna* in the *Tithitattvaṭikā* definitely identifies Jaratkāru with the serpent-goddess Manasā, although in earlier mythology Jaratkāru has nothing to claim the status of a serpent deity. The description

Kadrū is conceived as the wife of the sage Kaśyapa, the Primordial Male in creation. Manasā came to be regarded as the daughter of Śiva in later mythology, Śiva, of course, being the energy to whom the destruction of the Universe is attributed. Thus although, in a *stotra* in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, we have the assertion that she is the mind-born daughter of Kaśyapa, her origin from the seed of Siva has also found much favour with the Purāṇites. The above two concepts, again, were reconciled in the *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa* wherein she is called the mind-born daughter of Kaśyapa and the spiritual daughter of Śiva.[8] In the Pauranic age, the serpent chief Śeṣa is sometimes associated or identical with Balarāma who is represented as having a serpent wreath and also a club in hand.[9] In medieval sculptures, too, images of Balarāma are found bearing the canopy of a seven-hooded serpent.[10]

The conception of Manasā or Padmā as a serpent-goddess is, however, a very late development. The lotus symbol was

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of serpent-ornaments and of her holding a pair of Nāgas in her two hands makes it clear that the reference is to the serpent goddess who is further called Āstikamātā which, on the other hand, makes her identical with Jaratkāru.

Cf. *hemāmbhojanibhāṁ lasadviṣadharālaṁkārasaṁśobhitāṁ*
smerāsyāṁ parito mahoragagaṇaiḥ saṁsevyamānāṁ sadā |
devīmāstikamātaraṁ śiśusutām āpinatuṅgastanīṁ
hastāmbhojayugena nāga-yugalaṁ sambibhratīm āśraye ||

[8] *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa*, *Prakṛti-khaṇḍa*, Ch. 45, v. 2—

kanyā sā ca Bhagavatī Kaśyapasya ca mānasī |
teneyam Manasā devi manasā vā ca divyati ||

Cf. *Śiva-śiṣyā ca sā devi tena Śaiviti kirtitā* (verse 8).

[9] *Mahābhārata*, XIII. 147. 54 ff.

[10] The figure of Balarāma from Bodoh in Gwalior, belonging to the medieval period, is canopied by a seven-hooded serpent. See *A Guide to the Archaeological Museum at Gwalior*, Pl. XVIII.

primarily associated with the goddess of wealth, Lakṣmī. The images of certain other Viṣṇuite gods and goddesses also exhibit the same symbol. The mythological accout of Nārāyaṇa himself having a lotus-stalk rising up from his navel is certainly not very early, and it was at first the Lokapitṛ Prajāpati Brahman that was lotus-seated. In art too, such representations cannot go further than the 5th or 6th century A.D.[11] The name Padmā is certainly reminiscent of her intimate association with the lotus.[12] In the Purāṇa literature, at least in its later phase, Padmā, as mentioned along with Sarasvatī, the goddess of learning, has no other significance than as Lakṣmī, the goddess of Wealth.[13] Indeed, the commonest *dhyāna* of the goddess makes her ride on a swan,[14] the popular *vāhana* of Sarasvatī. The fact of her attaining the knowledge of Brahman in the form of the Earth, as already mentioned above, bespeaks this connection with Brahmāṇī or Sarasvatī.

The Buddhists too knew the serpent-goddess under the name Jāṅgulī. She is perhaps the nearest approach, iconographically speaking, to the Jaina goddess Padmāvatī. Jāṅgulī as the snake-goddess emanates from Akṣobhya, the 2nd Dhyānī Buddha. Like Padmāvatī, she is the goddess curing snake-bites and also preventing it. According to a *saṅgīti* in the *Sādhanamālā*, Jāṅgulī is as old as the Buddha himself who is said to have given to Ānanda the secret *mantra* for her worship. It is worthy of note that Jāṅgulī has been called in the *Sādhanamālā*, a Tārā, i e., a variety of the latter.[15] It is indeed curious that Jāṅgulī should be so called in Buddhist tradition also. Of the eight kinds of 'fear' which are dispelled by Tārā, to which fact she owes her name, the fear from serpents is one.[16] That Padmāvatī is but the same goddess in the Jaina pantheon as Tārā is in the Buddhist, is also stated clearly in the *Padmāvatīstotram.*[17] We know, however, that the group of goddesses going by the name of Tārā is generally an emanation of Amoghasiddhi. In the *Sādhanamālā*, Amoghasiddhi, the 4th (according to the Nepalese Buddhists, the 5th) Dhyānī Buddha, has, for his *vāhana*, a pair of Garuḍas. Although according to the Pauranic mythology, Garuḍa and the serpents are mutually intolerant of each other, their close relation, too, can hardly be denied. In fact, notwithstanding the description in the *Sādhanamālā*, representations of Amoghasiddhi have been found wherein a seven-hooded serpent forms the background of the main image, in the form of an umbrella.[18] The number of the hoods is very significant. It bears close resemblance to the representations of Pārśvanātha who must have either three, seven or eleven hoods as his canopy. These numbers are to be the distingushing features in recognising a figure of Pārśvanātha as distinct from those of Supārśvanātha whose serpent canopy must have 1, 5 or 9 hoods.[19]

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[11] A. K. Coomaraswamy, *Elements of Buddhist Iconography*, p. 68.

[12] It is interesting to note that as many as nine of the 15 Manasā images preserved in the Varendra Research Society, have been collected from a tank called Padumshahar in the Rajshahi District. See *Cat. Varendra Research Society*, p. 30.

[13] *Agni Purāṇa*, XLII. 7-8—

nairṛtyām Ambikāṁ sthāpya vāyavye tu Sarasvatīm /
Padmāmaiśe Vāsudevaṃ madhye Nārāyaṇañca vā //

[14] *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*—

Haṁsārūḍhāmudārāmaruṇitavasanāṁ sarvadāṁ sarvadaiva.

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[15] B. Bhattacharya, *Indian Buddhist Iconography*, p. 185; Foucher, *E tude sur I' Iconographie Bouddhique de l' Inde*, p. 89.

[16] The writer owes this suggestion to J. N. Banerjea, who has drawn his attention to this current etymology of Tārā. We should also note that *Jāṅgulika* came to mean a poison-curer in general in later lexicons. See *Amarakoṣa, Pātālavarga*, verse 11.

[17] Cf. *Tārā tvaṁ Sugatāgame Bhagavatī Gaurīti Śaivāgame*
Vajrā Kaulikaśāsane Jinamate Padmāvatī viśrutā /
Gāyatrī Śrutaśālināṁ Prakṛtirityuktāsi sāṁkhyāyane
mātar=Bhārati kiṃ prabhūtabhaṇitairvyāptaṁ samastaṁ tvayā // 19

Ms. No. 27 in the Buddreedass Temple Collection; cf. also *Tārāmānavimardinī Bhagavatī Devī ca Padmāvatī* (*ibid.*, 27); App. V, *Bhairavapadmāvatīkalpa*, p. 28.

[18] B. Bhattacharya, *Indian Buddhist Iconography*, p. 5, Pl. VIII-c.

The name Jāṅgulī of the Buddhist goddess most probably suggests her popular origin, as the goddess of the forest-sides or, more properly, a rural goddess.

Jāṅgulī as a snake-goddess curing snake-bite or preventing it is not, however, altogether unknown to the Jains. References to her in their literature are numerous. It is not unlikely, too, that apart from the conception of Padmāvatī, Jāṅgulī had an important place in Jain mythology. A Ms. dated Saṁvat 1546, i.e. 1489 A.D., from Jesalmer,[20] mentions her as a snake-goddess.[21] Buddhist Tāntricism came to have perceptible influence on Indian mind not before the 8th century of the Christian era. On the evidence of Tāranātha on which the above conclusion is based, it was the 7th and 8th centuries which saw the emergence of Tāntricism in India specially in the eastern parts thereof, notably Bengal. Tāntricism which is characterised by the worship of female energy is further said to have been diffused through such cults as the *Sahajayāna* which found its first exponent in Lakṣmīdevī, daughter of Indrabhūti, who, according to a Tibetan tradition, flourished about the eighth century A.D.[22] The feminine spirit as the deity presiding over the snakes is the product of this Tāntricism, and her form as conceived in Buddhist retualistic texts had not altogether failed to leave its mark on the other Indian religious sects. The text referred to above is said to have been composed in Saṁvat 1352 or 1295 A.D. by Jinaprabha Sūri.[23] Thus it is clear that, as early as the 13th century A.D. and most certainly a few centuries earlier, the Buddhist serpent-goddess Jāṅgulī was also familiar to the Jain writers, although as a distinct goddess in any definite iconic form she was not known to the latter. The form of Jāṅgulī as a deity appearing along with the central figure of Khadiravanī Tārā is best illustrated in a miniature painting on a 9th century Ms. of *Pañcaviṁśatisahasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* preserved in the Museum and Picture Gallery, Baroda. The figure of Jāṅgulī on the right is two-handed and has a canopy of five hoods of a serpent with a halo at the back. The left hand holds a serpent while the right hand seems to hold a *vajra*. Her seat appears to be a coiled serpent.[24] What, however, is the iconographic form of Jāṅgulī in Jainism is not very clear either in the texts or in any extant image thereof.

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[19] B. C. Bhattacharya, *Jaina Iconography*, pp. 60, 82.

[20] Cf. Ms. in the Buddreedass Temple Collection.

[21] Cf. *Durdāntaśābdikaṁmanyadarpasarpaika-Jāṅgulī* |
nityaṁ jāgarti jihvāgre viśeṣaviduṣāmiyam || 2

[22] For a detailed discussion, see *Indian Buddhist Iconography*, introduction, p. xxvi,

We may also draw the attention of scholars to the fact that the concept of Padmā or Viṣaharī as being accompanied by the eight principal Nāgas, regarded as her sons, as given in the *Padmāpurāṇa* of Vijaya Gupta as also the

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[23] Cf. *Pakṣeṣuśaktiśaśibhṛnmitavikramābde*
dhātryaṅkite haratithau puri yoginīnām |
Kātantrabibhrama iha vyataniṣṭa ṭikām
aprauḍhadhīrapi Jinaprabhasūriretām ||

[24] See Ms. exhibited at the Picture Gallery, State Museum, Baroda.

Bhaviṣya Purāṇa[25] has found an exact counterpart in the concept of Śuklā Kurukullā, a goddess emanating from the Dhyānī Buddha Amitābha who has been described as being attended on by the Eight Nāgas—Ananta, Vāsuki, Takṣaka, Karkoṭaka, Padma, Mahāpadma, Śaṅkhapāla and Kulika, each having a distinct colour of his own.[26] The names of these Eight Nāgas tally[27] exactly with the names given in the *Tithitattva* of Raghunandana.[28] The names of the Eight Nāgas also tally with those given in the *Bhairavapadmāvatīkalpa*, X. 14. The iconographic descriptions of these Eight Nāgas are given as follows in X. 15-16 of the *Bhairavapadmāvatīkalpa* of Malliṣeṇa :[29] Vāsuki and Śaṅkha, born of the Kṣatriya clan are of red colour ; Karkoṭa and Padma born of the Śūdra clan are black in colour ; Ananta and Kulika of the Brāhmaṇa clan possess white colour like the moon-stone and Takṣaka and Mahāpadma of the Vaiśya clan have yellow colour. In fact, the mutual influence of the Buddhist Kurukullā and Jaina Padmāvatī

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25 Cf. *Aṣṭanāgasahita mā esa Padmāvati—Padmāpurāṇa* (3rd ed., Pearymohan Dasgupta), p. 2 ; *Vande'haṁ sāṣṭanāgāmurukucayugalāṁ yoginīṁ kāmarūpām* (*Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*).

26 *Indian Buddhist Iconography*, p. 56.

27 A slight difference in the names of the Eight Nāgas is, however, to be noticed in the *Adbhutapadmāvatīkalpa*, IV. 49 ; cf.

> *Vāgbījakaśrītattvādyāntanamaḥ syustv Ananta-Vāsukinau* |
> *Takṣaka-Karkoṭaka-Kamala-Mahākamala-Śaṅkha-*
> *Kulijayāstadadhaḥ* ||

28 *Tithitattva* (ed. Mathuranath Sharma), p. 135.

29 Compare the present writer's article on the date of the *Bhairavapadmāvatīkalpa* in the *Indian Culture*, Vol. XI, No. 4. The date according to the calculations made therein, based on synchronisms with other works of Malliṣeṇa who was a Digambara Jain writer, falls sometime in the second quarter of the 11th century A.D.

is very prominent as the *Bhairavapadmāvatīkalpa* itself mentions Kurukullā in X. 41.[30]

We may discuss here as to whether these Nāgas are really nothing other than water-symbols as has been supposed by Coomaraswamy. No doubt, the names of some of these so-called Nāgas go to strengthen the said view; yet it is very significant that Padmā as the goddess of wealth and prosperity, being identical with the deity known as Śrī, most naturally had the *ādhāra* or constituent elements in the accepted eight kinds of treasures or *nidhis* in the shape of Padma, Mahāpadma, Makara, Kacchapa, Mukunda, Nīla, Nanda and Śaṅkha. It also stands to reason to suppose that the *nidhis* came to be identified with serpents because of the fact that the principal kinds of snakes had each a special variety of jewel on its hood, and that the snakes being residents of the nether regions were aptly considered as the carriers of them from out of waters, the ocean or *ratnākara* as it is significantly known.[31] The transformation, thus, of the wealth-goddess Lakṣmī into Padmā, the serpent-goddess, entailed as a necessary change of the eight kinds of treasures into the eight kinds of Nāgas or serpents, and we know that the goddess Lakṣmī was born out of the ocean, the abode of both the *nidhis* or treasures and the serpents.

As a serpent-goddess, Padmāvatī is perhaps the most popular figure in the Jain pantheon. From a study of the general description and the list of the boons conferred by her, one can easily recognise in her the most homely of the Jain goddesses. Even at a stage of development of her personality into an independent deity from the status of the *Śāsanadevī* of Pārśvanātha, we are constantly reminded of the fact of her origin, although a study of the numerous *stotras* in her honour and the elaborate system of ritual that had grown up round her worship, as also the varied objects prayed for (which apparently she was capable of bestowing on the devotee) leaves but little doubt about the important position, as an independent and influential goddess, she had risen to occupy in the Jain pantheon.

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[30] *Bhairavapadmāvatīkalpa*, X. 41.

[31] Cf. *Padminī nāma yā vidyā Lakṣmīstasyādhidevatā* /
tadādhāraśca nidhayastān me nigadataḥ śṛṇu //
tatra Padma-Mahāpadmān tathā Makara-Kacchapān /
Mukunda-Nīlān Nandaśca Śaṅkhaścaivāṣtamo nidhiḥ
(*Śabdakalpadruma* quoting Bharata); cf.

J. N Banerjea, *The Development of Hindu Iconography*, p. 116, note 1.

In order to make a study of the iconography of Padmāvatī or any other god or goddess, it is imperative to make an investigation about her affiliation to any of the highest divinities of the mythology concerned. It is interesting, however, that in the case of Padmāvatī, she has been most systematically affiliated to one or other of the higher divinities in Brahmanism, Buddhism or Jainism. Not only that, there is ideological similarity among all these Higher Divinities to whom the serpent goddess is affiliated in all the three principal religious systems of India. We have already discussed to some extent the connection of Jāṅgulī and Śuklā Kurukullā with Akṣobhya and Amitābha whose emanations they are taken to be and are often represented in art as bearing their effigies on the aureole behind or on the crest. Reference may also be made in this connection to an inscription of the 2nd century B.C. which mentions an *apsaras* Padmāvatī as being in attendance on the Buddha after his Enlightenment. The inscription was found on one of the Bharhut gateways in Central India. The name Padmāvatī, further, as that of the capital city of the Nāga kings who flourished in the 3rd century A.D. is also significant. It is mentioned in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, and the entire scene of the play *Mālatīmādhava* by Bhavabhūti is laid in that city.[32] The connection of the Eight Nāgas as attendants on Amitābha, the Dhyānī Buddha for Śuklā Kurukullā, is also to be compared with the conception according to which Padmāvatī is attended on by the same Eight Nāgas, both according to the Brahmanic and the Jain mythology.[33] The *Padmāpurāṇa*, cited above, whose date according indication given in the text itself falls sometime in the latter half of the 15th century A.D.,[34] says that Padmāvatī was the daughter of Hara.[35] The *dhyāna* of Manasā or Padmā as given in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* calls her Maheśā (cf. *Devīṁ Padmāṁ Maheśāṁ śaśadharavadanām*, etc.). In the *Padmāvatīstotram* of the Jains too, Padmāvatī is called Mahā-Bhairavī which speaks of her connection with the Śaiva mythology, Bhairava being the name for Śiva. The iconographic details (according to the epics) of Hara, wherein he is connected with a serpent coil, are too well-known to need mention here. This conception of Padmāvatī as the daugher of Hara has close similarity in her concept in the Jain mythology as the Yakṣinī of Pārśvanātha who has a seven-hooded serpent as his canopy. In Buddhist ideology, too, as we have already noticed,

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[32] M. B. Garde, *The Site of Padmāvatī in An . Rep., A.S.I.*, 1915-16, pp. 104-05.

[33] See above ; also *Padmāpurāṇa*, p. 2 ; *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* ; also *Bhairavapadmāvatikalpa*, X. 14.

[34] Cf. *Ṛtu-śūnya-veda-śaśi-parimita śak |*
Sultān Hosen sāha nṛpatitilak ||
(*Padmāpuṛāṇa*, p. 4).

The date, however, is disputed. Another Ms. of the same text has *ṛtuśaśivedaśaśi* which gives 1416 Śaka (1494 A.D.) as opposed to 1406 Śaka (1484 A.D.) given in the verse quoted above.

[35] Cf *Harașite pṛthivite nāmila Hara-sutā |*
Āsan cāpiyā vase Devī Harer duhitā ||
(*ibid.*, p. 2).

Amoghasiddhi as the Sire of Tārā who has been compared with Padmāvatī, has a seven-hooded serpent as his canopy. The number (seven) of the hoods of the serpent forming the canopy is indeed very significant. Although more easily connected with the Śaiva myths, Pārśvanātha, in order to be given the prominence he deserves in Jain faith, has been endowed with this seven-hooded canopy, for, in the Hindu tradition, the exalted form of Viṣṇu has the seven-headed heavenly Nāga unlike the earthly cobra of Siva. This shows, if anything, that, while the Jain assimilates the Śaiva character in regard to the general myths about serpent deities and their worship, yet it cannot do away with the conception of the celestial seven-headed Śeṣa when any consideration for an exalted form of a deity and its imagery was taken up.[36]

It is interesting, however, to note that, according to a Digambara tradition, the icon of Padmāvatī is to have on her crest the effigy of the lord of the serpents. The Śvetāmbara text *Bhairavapadmāvatīkalpa* of Malliṣeṇa thus gives a description of the goddess :

Pannagādhipaśekharāṁ vipulāruṇāmbujaviṣṭarāṁ
kurkuṭoragavāhanāmaruṇaprabhāṁ kamalānanām |
tryambakāṁ varadāṅkuśāyatapāśadivyaphalāṅkitāṁ
cintayet kamalāvatīṃ japatāṃ satāṃ phaladāyinīm || 12

Although, we know, it is usual in Buddhist iconography to represent the figure of the Sire on the head or crown or the aureole at the back of their emanations, in Jain iconography, it is the figure of the lord of the serpents, Dharaṇendra who has been conceived of as the consort of Padmāvatī,[37] and not Pārśvanātha, that is to be represented on the *śekhara* of the image of Padmāvatī. The *Śāsanadevatās* as emanations of the respective Tīrthaṅkaras seem to be a later development in Jain mythology. There were originally the principal converts, male and female, who as zealous defenders of the faith were to be associated with each Tīrthaṅkara with whom some mythological stories or legends are related to connect them. The *Pravacanasāroddhāra* discussing the character of a Yakṣa only lays down that they are none but sincere adherents to the faith. The *Pratiṣṭhākalpa* says that a *Śāsanadevatā* is one that upholds the knowledge preached by the Jina.[38] The *Ācāradinakara* of Vardhamāna Sūri characterises the Yakṣas as those that maintained and guarded the Śrī-Saṅgha of the Jains.[39] We may draw attention to the Gaṇadhara cult in Jainism. With somewhat similar, if not the same, zeal, the Gaṇadharas, the main converts to the faith and the principal disciples, are offered worship and much in the same way as the *Śāsanadevas* represented in art. Thus Gautama, the Gaṇadhara of Mahāvīra, is offered worship in connection with the worship of Pārśvanātha and Padmāvatī.[40]

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[36] For a detailed discussion about the origin and development of the serpent cult, the reader is referred to C.S. Wake, *The Origin of Serpent Worship*, Ch. III, pp. 81 ff. Here the author has also given a summary of the arguments of R. Brown who contends that serpent worship has a closer connection with solar mythology. Vide R. Brown, *The Great Dionysiak Myth*, 1878, Vol. II, p. 66.

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[37] Cf. *Padmāvati pātu Phaṇindrapatnī*
(*Padmāvatistotram, loc. cit.*).

The *Pannagādhipa* referred to in the above verse may as well and more consistently refer to Pārśvanātha who is primarily the deity of serpents (*pannaga*). This is also in consonance with the numerous representations of the serpent goddess Padmāvati shown with the effigy of Pārśvanātha on the crest or on the aureole. On the other hand, no image or painting of Padmāvati is found with Dharaṇendra shown on the crest or the aureole.

[38] Cf. *Yā pātu śāsanaṁ Jainaṁ sadyaḥ pratyūhanāśini...bhūyāt śāsanadevatā* quoted in *Jaina Iconography*, p. 92.

[39] Cf. *Ye kevale suragaṇe milite Jināgre*
Śrīsaṁgharakṣaṇavicakṣaṇatāṁ vidadhyuḥ |
Yakṣāsta eva paramarddhivivṛddhibhāja
āyāntu śāntahṛdayā Jina-pūjane'tra ||
(*Ācāradinakara*, p. 173).

A Yakṣa, however, came to be regarded as an emanation of the particular Tīrthaṅkara to whom one was attached as his Śāsanadeva. By about the 11th century A.D., this was firmly established as we find, in the *Nirvāṇakalikā* of Pādalipta Sūri, mention of the Yakṣas as emanations of the Tīrthaṅkaras.[41] It is, however, to be borne in mind that the name Yakṣa as originally used in connection with the *Śāsanadevatās* of the Tīrthaṅkaras, came gradually to signify a higher status than its more commonplace use does. We may refer here to the *kāya* theory of the Buddhists who, adopting the principle of the *Tri-kāya*, suppose that each Buddha has a three-fold *kāya* or body, i.e. aspect. In virtue of these 'aspects' or natures, there are three distinct manifestations or existences of each Buddha on the earth, in *Nirvāṇa* and in the heavens respectively. These aspects are *Nirmāṇa-kāya* or 'the body of Transformation' which is according to some scholars a 'magical' body or an illusion,[42] *Dharma-kāya* or 'state or body of essential purity,' and *Sambhoga-kāya* or 'body of supreme happiness'. These three states of existence are characterised by practical *Bodhi*, essential *Bodhi* and reflected *Bodhi* respectively. And this *kāya* theory is responsible for regarding the Mānuṣī Buddha as an emanation from the Dhyānī Buddha. For the Dhyānī Buddha as an embodiment of absolute purity manifests his earthly form in the Mānuṣī Buddha, the mortal manifestation of the immortal abstraction. The necessity for this manifestation lay in the fact of the Mānuṣī Buddha as the mortal ascetic preaching the Law on earth and helping its preservation in that way.[43] Although there is great difference in the fundamentals of the two theories of emanation as obtained in Buddhism, put forth above, and in Jainism as implied in the concept of the *Śāsanadevas*, the function of the preaching, or more properly of the preservation, of the Law is generally attributed to the forms emanating in both. And although this common attribute was there, the difference, nevertheless, was very much conspicuous, as also was it inevitable because of the fact that in the Buddhist the divine mystic element was predominant while in the Jain it is the human. Consequently, while we find an easy transformation in the case of the Buddhas, in the Jain it is merely a case of divinity put on earthly persons, and making them just adorable as Servants of the Faith. Moreover, a *Yakṣa* or a *Yakṣiṇī*, as was the name obtainable with regard to the *Śāsanadevatās*, was quite different from the Yakṣa of usual significance and application. In fact, a Yakṣa or a Yakṣiṇī originally attached as such to a Tīrthaṅkara came to be attended on by other Yakṣas and Yakṣiṇīs, the application of the terms in such cases retaining this usual sense of a demi-god.[44] Thus we find that, in the growth of Jain mythology, Padmāvatī was in the first stage a *Śāsanadevatā* attached to the 23rd Tīrthaṅkara, Pārśvanātha,[45] but afterwards enjoying the status of an independent deity who received worship as a serpent-goddess curing snake-bites as also of a deity to be invoked for such purposes as *māraṇa*, *uccāṭana*, *vaśīkaraṇa*, etc.

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[40] Cf. *Oṁ Hrīṁ aiṁ śrīśrī-Gautamagaṇarājāya svāhā*
(*Bhairavapadmāvatikalpa*, App. VIII, p. 56).

[41] *Nirvāṇakalikā* (ed. M. B Zaveri), p. 34.

[42] L. de la Vallée Poussin, *The Three Bodies of a Buddha* (*JRAS*, October, 1906).

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[43] For a fuller discussion on the theory of *Trikāya* and its implications, see A. Getty, *The Gods of Northern Buddhism*, pp. 10-12.

[44] Padmāvatī, herself originally a *Yakṣiṇī* of Pārśvanātha, is said to have been attended on by *Yakṣas* and *Siddhas*. See v. 3 (p. 31) of the App., *Bhairavapadmāvatīkalpa* ; here, however, *Yakṣa* seems to have the commonplace significance of a demi-god.

[45] Thus in the invocatory verse (*āhvānaśloka*) in the *Padmāvatīstotram*,

The iconographic details of Padmāvatī are varied. The *Padmāvatīstotram* of an anonymous writer[46] conceives her as the *Ādimātā* or the Primordial Power, the *Ādiśakti*. She is also identified with almost all the important goddesses in Jain mythology. In other words, Padmāvatī has been conceived as the Primordial Power, the source and fountainhead of all the different powers or presiding deities represented as so many goddesses in the hierarchy of the Jain pantheon.

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we find the goddess still regarded as the deity presiding over the sermon preached by the Lord although she has attained a far greater importance as an independent deity in some works.

[46] Cf. *Padmāvatī jayati śāsanapuṇyalakṣmīḥ.*

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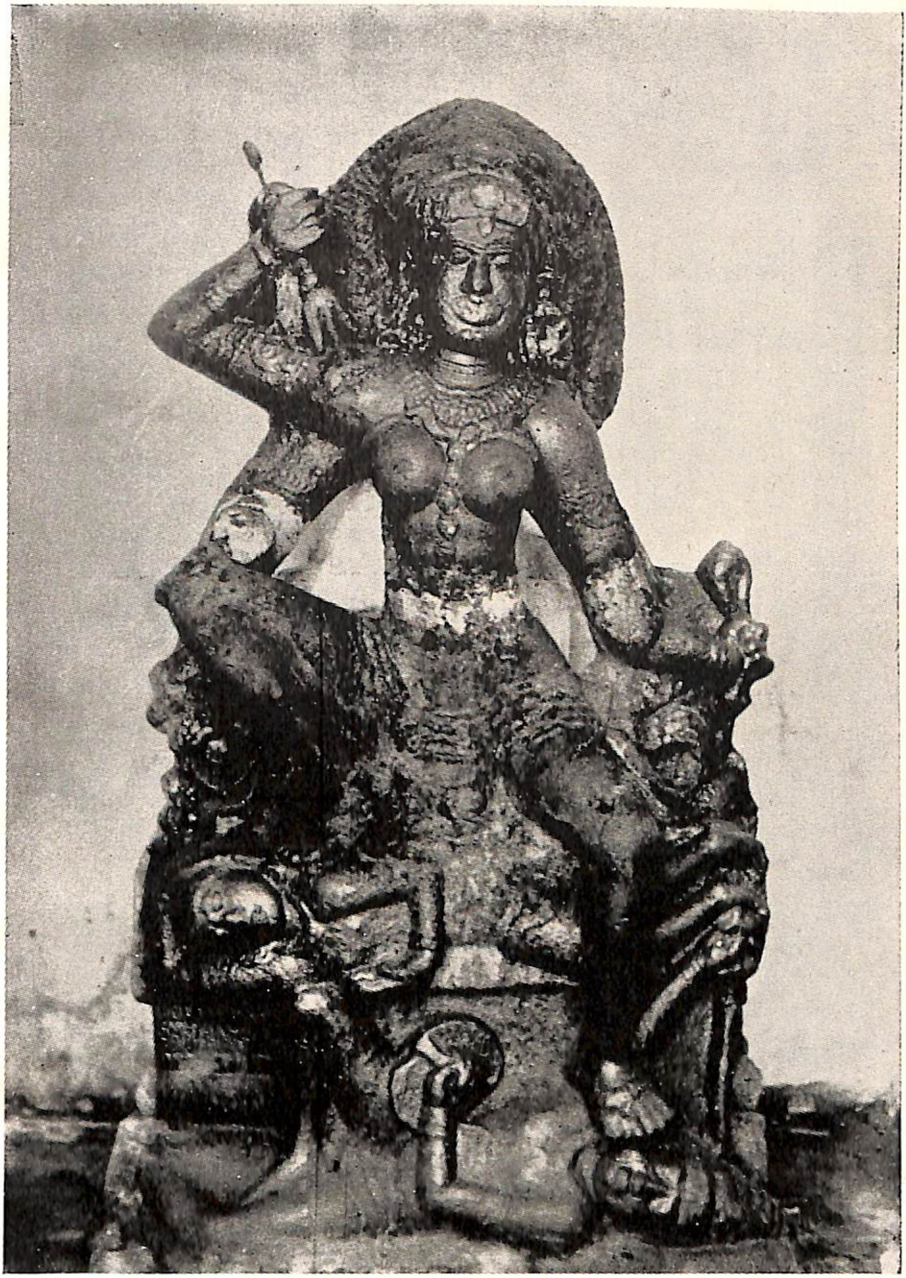
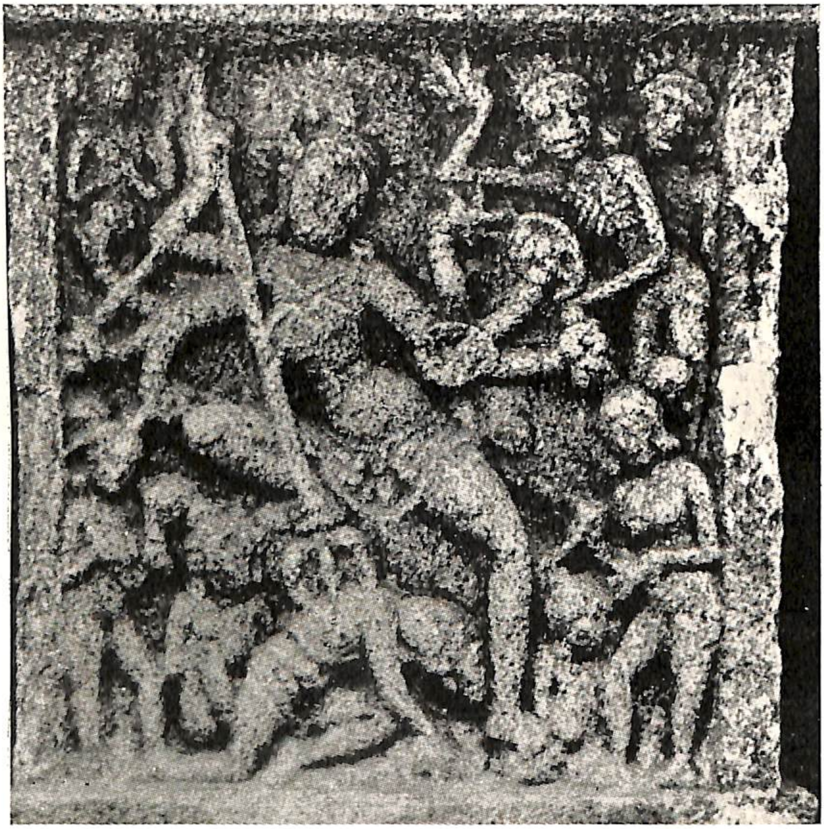
Addenda et Corrigenda

Page 9, line	15.	*Read*—Ardhanārīśvara
,, 25, line	1.	Read—*Ṣaṇmatasthāpanācārya*
,, 75, line	16.	*Read*—Jajpur on the river
,, 83, line	9.	*Read*—pavilion
,, ,, line	28.	*Read*—Debala
,, 90, line	7.	*Read*—Pārvatī
,, 110, lines	13-17.	*Add Editorial Note*—No image of Tārā was actually discovered at Nagarjunikonda.
,, 116, lines	21 ff.	*Add Editorial Note*—The *Matsya Purāṇa* (XII. 46) mentions Tārā as a form of Dākṣāyaṇī worshipped on Mt. Kiṣkindhā.
,, ,, lines	30-34.	*Add Editorial Note*—It is wrong to assign the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* (X. 18) to the seventh-sixth century B.C. It is not earlier than the 2nd-3rd century B.C., its tenth book being admittedly late. See Keith, *JRAS*, 1915, p. 840 ; Raychaudhuri, *Mat. Stud. E. Hist. Vaiṣ. Sect*, 1936, p. 107 ; Banerjea, *Paur. Tānt. Rel.*, p. 38.
,, 118, line	3.	*Read*—Hindu
,, 120, lines	3-5.	*Add Editorial Note*—The *Devībhāgavata* (VII. 38. 13), assigned to the 11th or 12th century A.D., refers to the foreign origin of Nīlasarasvatī—*tathā Nīlasarasvatyāḥ sthānaṁ Cīneṣu viśrutam.* See Sircar, *The Śākta Pīṭhas*, p. 107 ; Hazra, *Studies in the Upapurāṇas*, Vol. II, pp. 346-47. There is no doubt that some aspects of Tārā, such as Nīlasarasvatī, originated outside India.
,, 162, line	33.	*Add Editorial Note*—*For*—3rd century A.D., *read*—3rd and 4th centuries A.D.

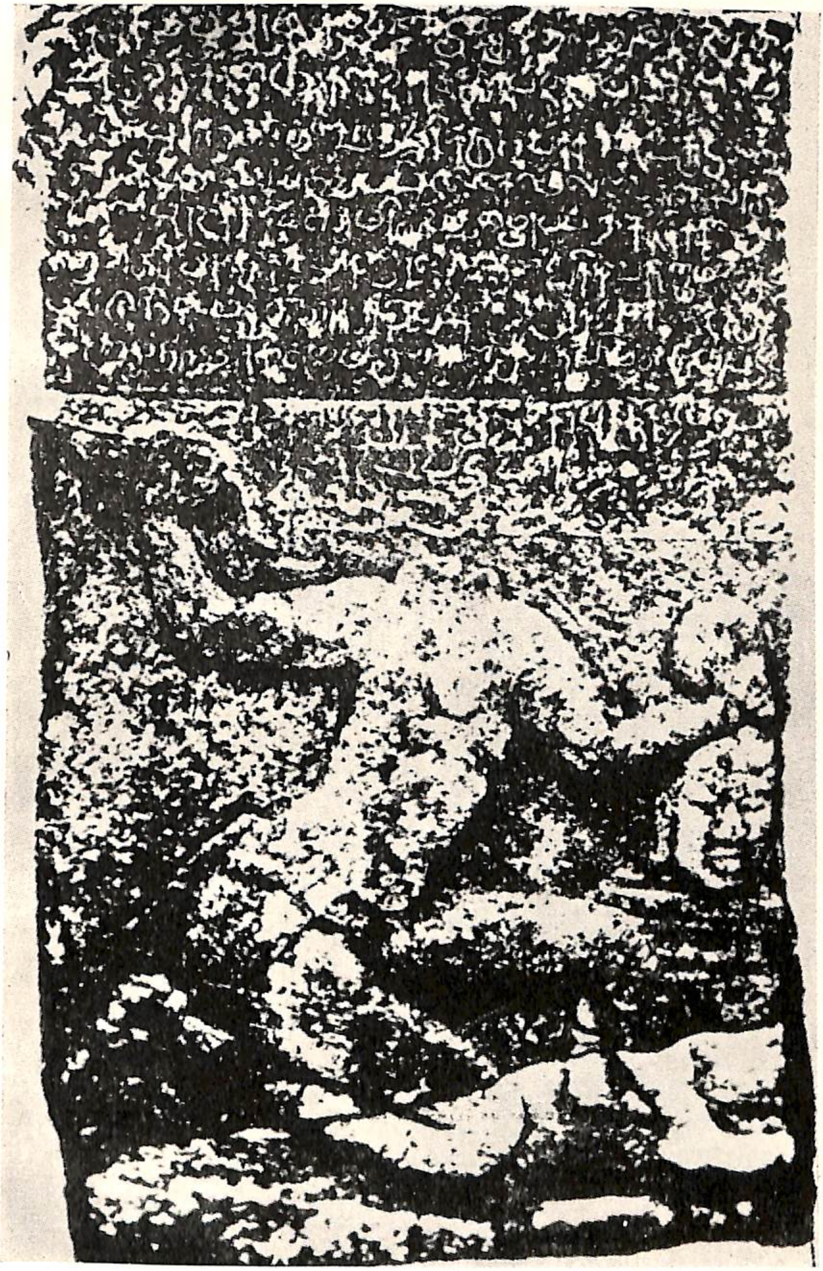


Niśumbhasūdanī (Stone), Virakaliamman Temple, Tanjore East.
(Part I, Article 2)

PLATE II

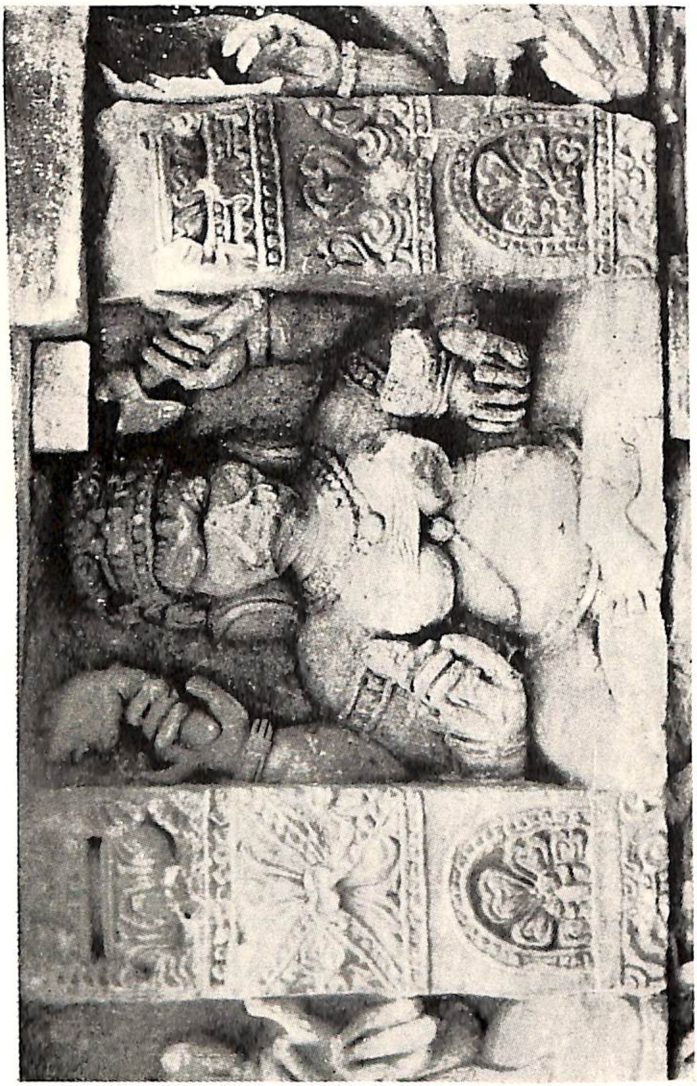


Niśumbhasūdanī (Stone Panel), Ṣiva Temple, Pullamangai, Tanjore District.
(Part I, Article 2)



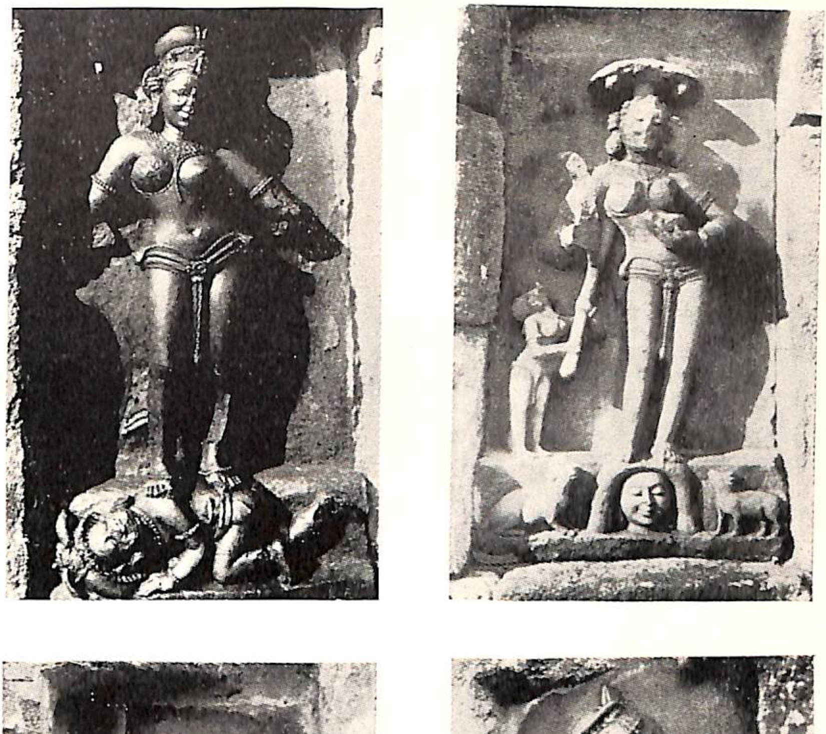
Head-offering, Mallam, Nellore District.
(Part I, Article 2)

PLATE IV



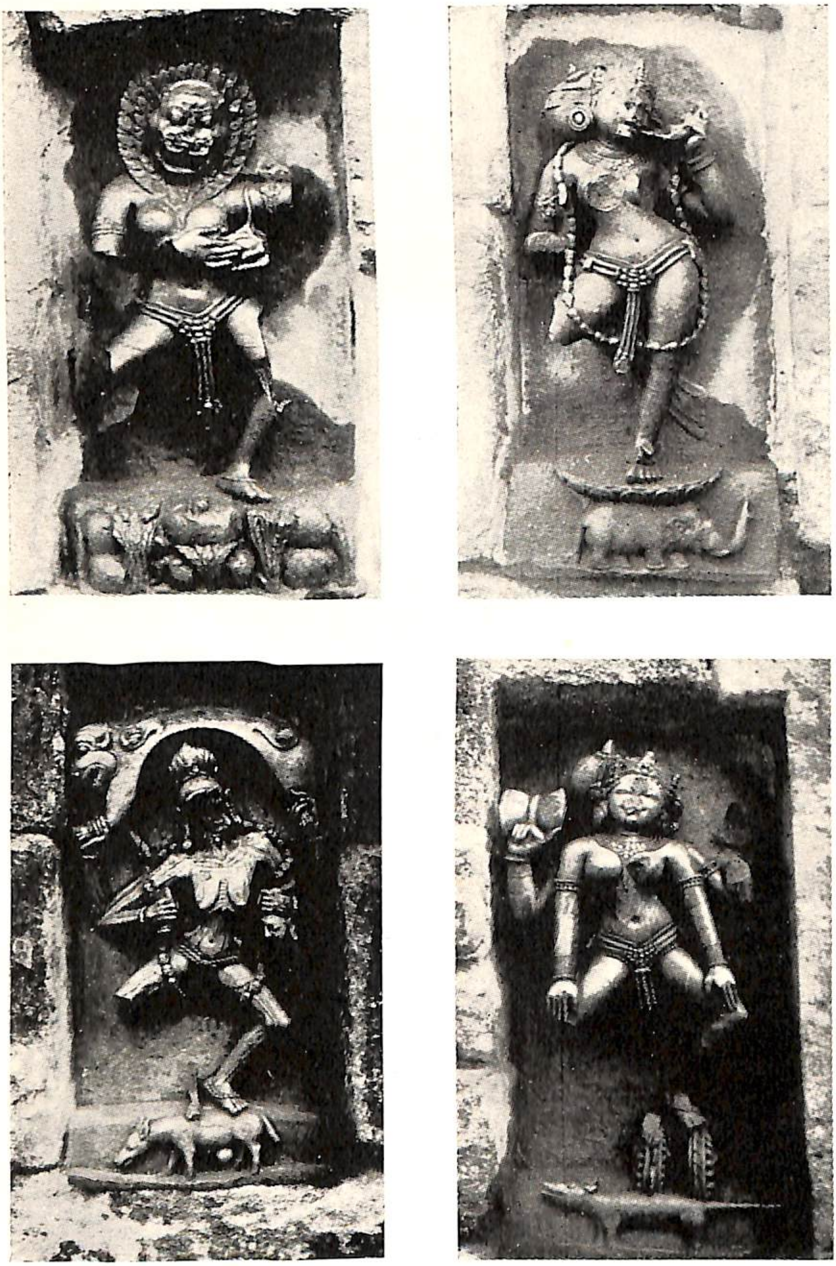
Vārāhī, Paraśurāmeśvara Temple, Bhubaneswar.
(Part I, Article 9)

PLATE V



Figures 1-4—Yoginīs, Cauṣaṭ-yoginī Temple, Hirapur.
(Part I, Article 9)

PLATE VI



Figures 1-4—Yoginīs, Cauṣaṭ-yoginī Temple, Hirapur.
(Part I, Article 9)

PLATE VII

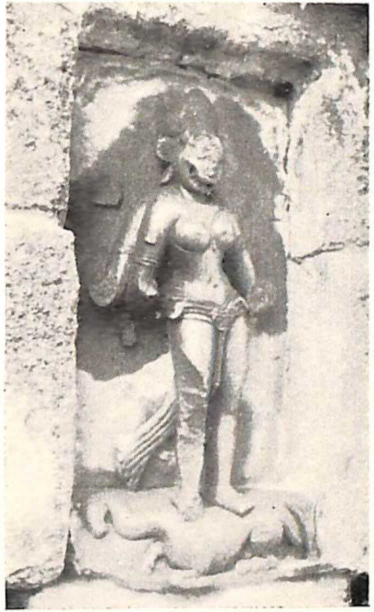


Figure 1—Yoginī, Causaṭ-yoginī Temple,
Hirapur.
(Part I, Article 9)

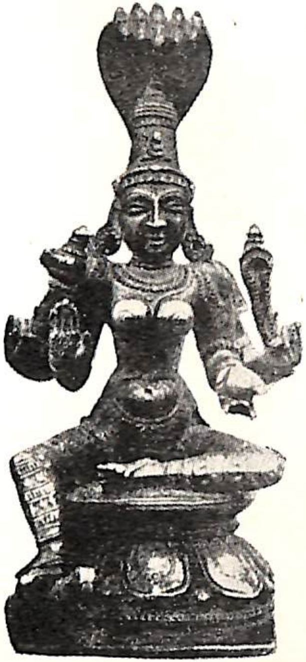
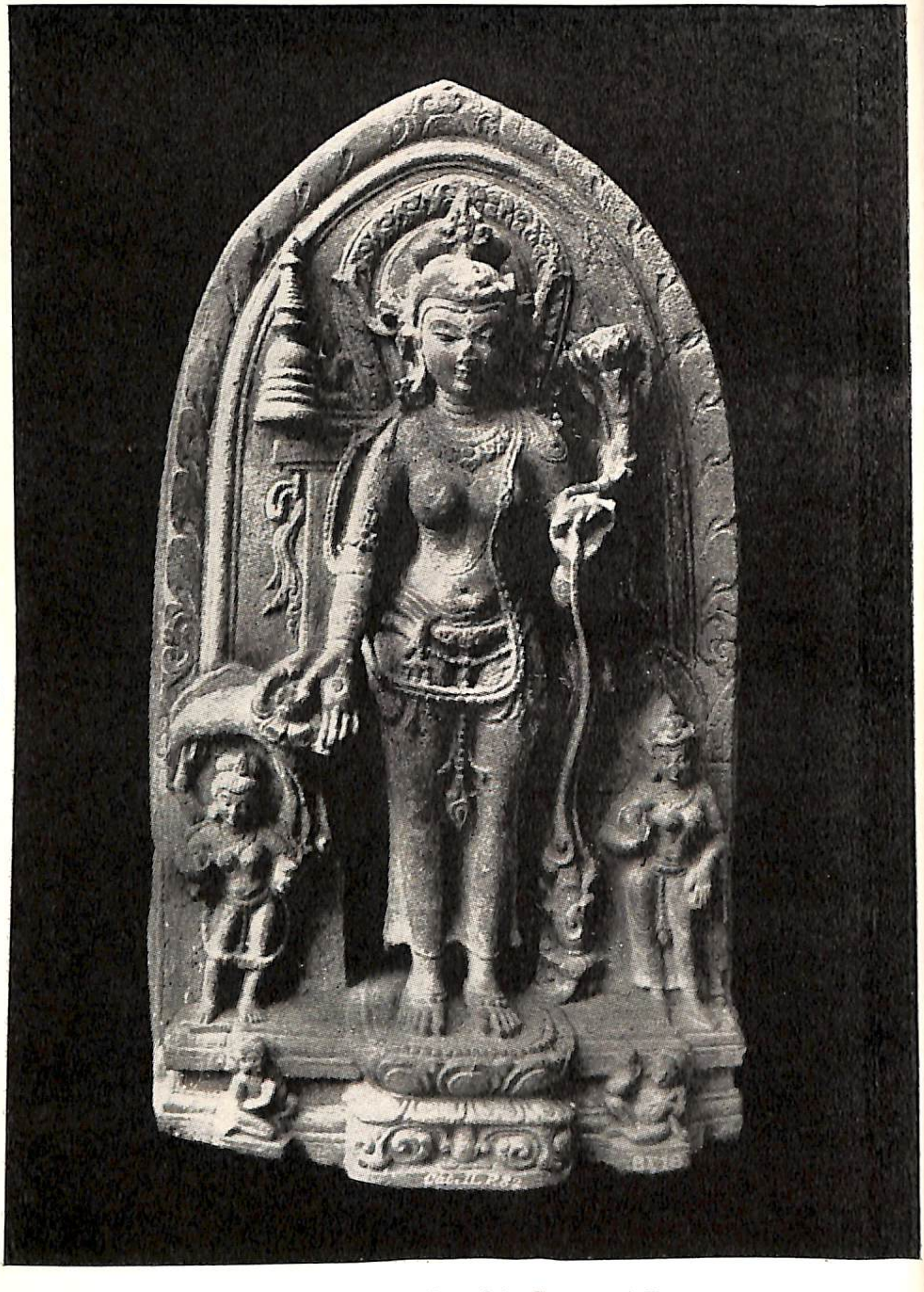
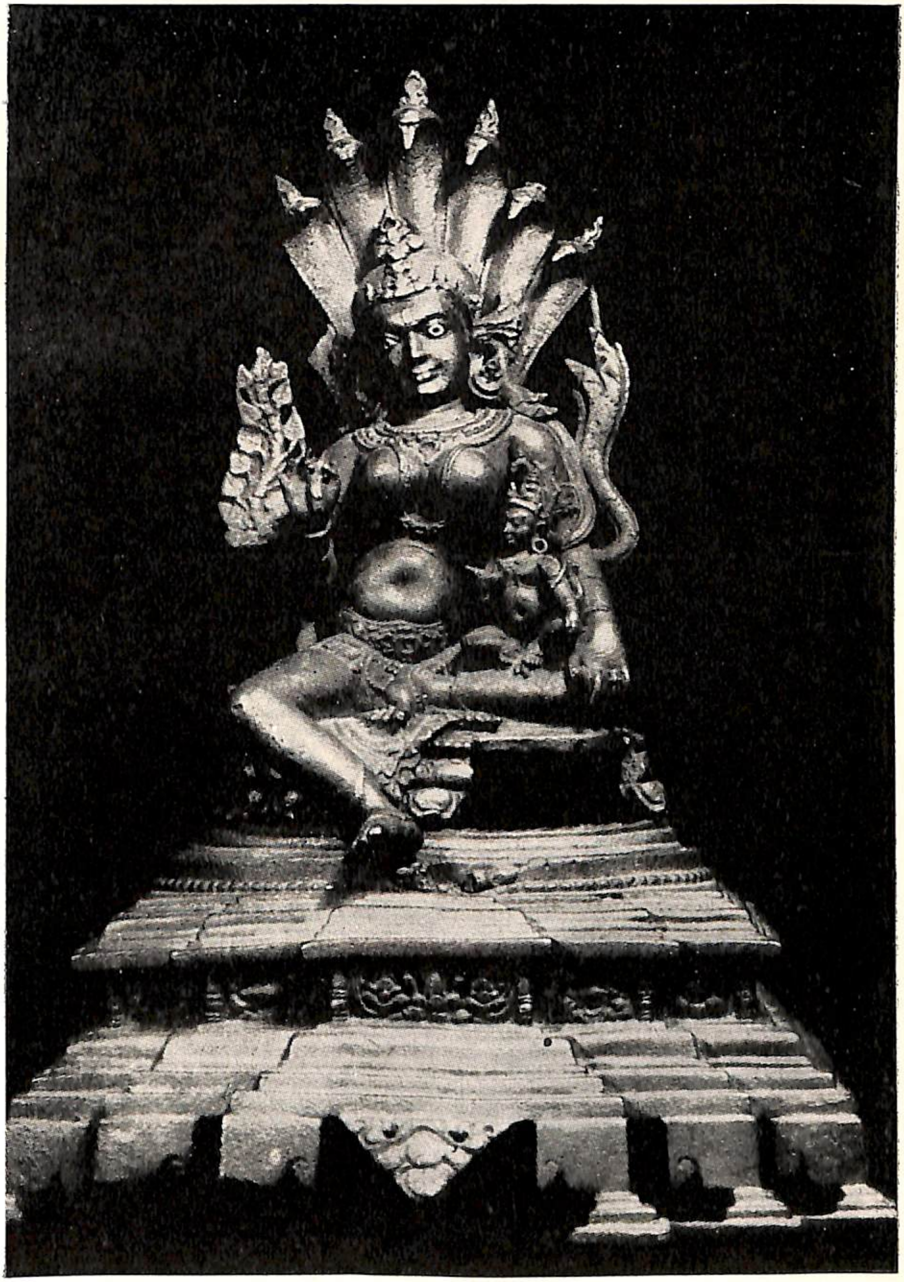


Figure 2—Padmāvatī (Bronze),
Tiruparuttikunram, 12-13th Century A.D.
(Part II, Article 6).

PLATE VIII



Tārā (Stone), Bihar, 9th Century A.D.
(Part II, Article 6).



Manasā (Brass), Bengal, 15-16th Century A.D.
(Part II, Article 6).

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